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MEMOIRS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

सत्यमेव जयते

No. 70

The Gupta Temple at Deogarh

BY

PANDIT MADHO SARUP VATS, M.A., HONY. F.R.A.S.
Director General of Archaeology in India.

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PREFACE

The Gupta temple at Deogarh has always attracted attention since the time of General Cunningham. In 1917-18 Rai Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni, the then Superintendent of the Hindu and Buddhist Monuments, Northern Circle, excavated its terraced plinth which was buried in débris and also exposed the remains of a few other shrines within the rubble enclosure constructed round it by the Public Works Department. At each corner of the plinth round the main temple was recovered a small shrine, the five together constituting one of the earliest examples of a *pañchāyatana*. It was already known to contain lithic representations from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and I have now been able to recover a number of panels connected with the life of Śrī Kṛishṇa and a few legends from the *Mahābhārata*. Originally, a large number of sculptures in two tiers were built into the plinth, but, of these, only a small fraction has survived. The present collection has been got together from the temple compound, some houses in the village, or exhumed from the sloping ground at the foot of the adjoining hill and also from a piled up heap under a banyan tree in front of the Forest Rest House at Deogarh. The excellence of the temple struck me on my first visit in 1927-28, and to rescue the sculptures I resolved to build here a small godown to its east. Accordingly, the godown was erected in the year 1928, but the heavy architectural pieces of this and other later shrines within the compound were arranged round the temple itself.

The Gupta temple, which contains some of the finest sculptures, is a gem of architecture ; its intrinsic merit and beauty will, I am sure, be greatly appreciated by all lovers of art. It embodies the most vivid and virile expression of early Gupta art which did not lose its vitality till the end of the 6th century A. D. Moreover, it is a very important example of the beginning of *śikhara*, which was evolved by building a multi-storeyed, straight-edged pyramid in receding tiers. At this stage it was ponderous and heavy and had not yet developed that graceful, tall, curvilinear spire which was perfected in the early mediaeval period. I had long cherished the desire of writing on this temple, but the late Mr. Sahni, who had excavated here, intended publishing a Memoir on it. For a number of years after his death I had nothing to do with Deogarh and, therefore, could not begin writing. The drawings have necessarily taken time. Much of the conjectural restoration given in Pl. V is based on what actually survives on one or another side of the temple façade and for the rest I had to draw upon the profiles of contemporary temples given on either side of its own door-frame. It may, therefore, be hoped that the restoration, based as it is mostly on internal evidence, will be found to give a close approximation of a *śikhara* temple of the Early Gupta Period.

I have great pleasure in recording my grateful thanks to Dr. V. S. Agrawala, Superintendent, Central Asian Antiquities Museum, and Mr. C. Sivaramamurti, Superintendent, Archaeological Section, Indian Museum, Calcutta, for several valuable suggestions which I have incorporated ; to Mr. A. Ghosh for help in making the plates and reading through the manuscript ; to Messrs. Satkauri Biswas, Murarilal Arora and Rama Krishna, Conservation Assistants, who assisted me in the conservation of the temple ; to Mr. Gaurishankar, Draftsman, for the excellent drawings prepared by him ; and to Messrs. Devi Dayal Mathur, Mangat Rai Mehta and S. G. Tewari for the photographs.

NEW DELHI ;
The 16th June, 1951.

MADHO SARUP VATS.

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THE GUPTA TEMPLE AT DEOGARH

CHAPTER I

TOPOGRAPHY

SITUATION

Deogarh is situated 24° 32′ N. and 78° 15′ E, close to the south-western limit of the Lalitpur Sub-Division of the Jhānsi district in a semi-circular bend overlooking the right bank of the Betwā (Vetravatī). It is 19 miles from Lalitpur and 7 miles from Jakhlaun, both being stations on the Central Railway. From the former, it can be approached by a motor or *tonga* over a fair-weather District Board road of which the last four miles from Saipura to Deogarh are maintained by the Forest Department, but at Jakhlaun no vehicle, other than a bullock cart, is available. There is a Forest Rest House at Deogarh adjoining which the Jaina community has built a spacious *dharamśālā* for the use of pilgrims and others. Flowing for the most part in a rocky bed, the Betwā forms a series of deep pools and picturesque cataracts. "The narrow gorge where it forces its way through the Vindhyan hills and the magnificent sweep it makes below the steep sandstone cliff which is surmounted by the fort of Deogarh[1] is a scene of striking beauty"[2]. Here, along the foot of the rocky headland which constitutes the right bank of the Betwā, the plain falls into a well-marked depression made by the drainage of this area. Across this depression, at the western edge of the elevated plain stands the solitary Gupta Temple, locally known as *Sāgar Maṛh* from the square, rock-cut well in front. Girt by hills on the south, and still smaller ones to west and north its situation, dominating the depression, is a singularly picturesque one (Pl. I). Close proximity of the river and extremely well-wooded nature of the landscape around provide a beautiful setting to this gem of Gupta architecture. Moreover, it lay on the highway of imperial communications during the Gupta period which connected Deogarh with Pawāyā in the north and with Eran, Bhilsā, Udayagiri and Sānchī in the south, thence with Ujjain and Bāgh to west and south-west and again through Jhānsi and Kānpur with Allahabad[3], Banaras and Pāṭaliputra (Patna).

HISTORY

For many centuries later Deogarh continued to have Hindu and Jaina temples. Of the former, basements of a few shrines were unearthed by Daya Ram Sahni about 35 years ago in the present compound of the Gupta temple itself and closeby there are numerous ruins lost in the dense jungle which covers the rising ground along the western foot of the Vindhyan spur. The earliest remains in this range dated to the

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[1] Also known as Karnāli fort ; its height above the plain is about 300 ft.

[2] *District Gazetteer*, p. 10.

[3] There are a number of Gupta monuments round Allahabad, such as Kosam, Bhīṭā and Garhwā ; and in the Kānpur district the brick temple at Bhitargaon.

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Gupta Period are the inscriptions (with the *Sapta-mātṛikā* relief) at Nahar Ghāṭī[1] and Sidh-kī-Guphā[2] and the *Sapta-mātṛikā* relief etc. at Rāj-Ghāṭī on the southern scarp of the hill overlooking the Betwā. Later than these is the Varāha temple[3] near the south-western edge of the hill. The large group of Jaina temples occupy the southern part of the Karnāli fort. Most of them contain nude figures, some of colossal size, of Jaina *Tīrthaṅkaras* and others, while there are a number of inscriptions and an enormous wealth of loose sculptures which have been collected by the Jaina community. A very large number of these have been built, rather haphazardly and in an objectionable manner, into the compound wall of the largest temple, No. 12. Among the early mediæval inscriptions the one of Mihirabhoja dated Śaka 784 / Saṁvat 919 (A. D. 862) engraved on a pillar in the porch of temple No. 12, another large one, on an octagonal pillar of the *maṇḍapa*, which mentions the *Mūlasaṅgha* and the Chandella inscription of Kīrtivarman (after whom the fort was called Kīrtigiri durga) dated in Saṁvat 1154 (A. D. 1097) at the Rājghāṭī along the south-western edge of the hill are noteworthy. The Jaina temples, however, continued to be built till the middle of the 18th century A. D.; and still later records bring us down to A. D. 1819[4]. Once again, within the last two decades, the Jaina community has begun to evince interest in their sacred monuments.

NAME AND DEDICATION

General Cunningham, P. C. Mukerji and Daya Ram Sahni all agree that the Gupta temple at Deogarh was dedicated to Vishṇu. The pedestal now lying in the cella belongs to an image other than the original. For want of a name, Cunningham[5], from its unmistakable characteristic features, called it the Gupta temple, but Mukerji[6] "from the ten incarnations of Vishṇu, which were originally depicted on the temple, and from the rock-cut well" in front called it the Daśāvatāra temple or *Sāgar Maṛh*[7]. The latter name, still in vogue, is obvious enough, but the former was probably current when Mukerji wrote his report in 1899. After that, Daya Ram Sahni excavated the plinth of the temple and identified several panels which were recovered by him in the excavations or found built into the compound wall constructed round it by the Public Works Department. As these panels, which originally adorned the plinth, only purported to be scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Sahni[8] naturally thought that the temple, in the absence of any other incarnations of Vishṇu, could not be called the Daśāvatāra temple. In the course of my recent investigations, however, the incarnations of Kṛishṇa, Balarāma, Nṛisimha and Vāmana have been found at and around the temple in addition to those of Rāma and Nara and Nārāyaṇa

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1 It is a rock-cut flight of steps leading down to the river.

2 An unfinished cave.

3 In this temple, which is much more ruined, the great reliefs on the Gupta temple, *viz.*, those of Gajendra-moksha the penance of Nara and Nārāyaṇa and Ananta-śāyī Vishṇu, are reproduced, but, like the temple, the copies are markedly inferior.

4 *Annual Progress Report, Hindu and Buddhist Monuments, Northern Circle* (referred to below as *A.P.R., H. & B. Mons., N. C.*) for the year ending March 1918, pp. 21ff, Nos. 143-54.

5 Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey Reports* (referred to below as *C. S. R.*) Vol. X, p. 105.

6 P. C. Mukerji, *Report on the Antiquities in the district of Lalitpur*, 1899 Edn., Vol. I, pp. 10-11.

7 Literally means the temple on the tank.

8 *A. P. R., H. & B., Mons., N. C.* for the year ending March 1918, p. 7.

already known to Sahni. It may thus be assumed that in the large number of reliefs missing from the plinth some of the *avatāras* of Vishṇu have disappeared. The figure of Vishṇu seated on the coils of the cosmic serpent Śesha over the *lalāṭabimba* of the door-lintel of the cella and several large busts of Vishṇu found in the remains would point to the dedication of the temple to that deity, representations of his incarnations on the plinth being a further glorification of the image installed in the sanctum. In this connection Sahni[1] has pointed out that one[2] of the two large pillars (square in section), found in the compound of the Gupta temple, is inscribed with two lines in Gupta script[3] which refer to a Bhāgavata Govinda, a votary of the Lord of Keśavapura, which may refer to the image of Vishṇu installed in the temple, under the name of Keśavapurasvāmī who might have been the presiding deity of Deogarh also, then called Keśavapura[4]. To whomsoever it may have been dedicated there is no doubt that it belonged to the Bhāgavata cult, and Govinda, who does not otherwise reveal his identity, has been particular in specifying that he was a Bhāgavata. Be that as it may, being the only Gupta temple at Deogarh, it would be less confusing if, after Cunningham and Sahni, I call it by the same name.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, Appendix A, p. 12, serial No. 3.

[2] It is now erected at the left end of the porch of the sculpture godown.

[3] For its reading and date, see p. 28 *infra*, pl. XIII.

[4] At Mathurā the site of Katrā Keśavadeva is still called Keśavapura *muhalla*. From this site an inscription of Chandragupta II (Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, No. 4, p. 25) and several Gupta sculptures including images of Vishṇu have been recovered. Keśavapurasvāmī might therefore have been the name under which a temple of Vishṇu was built there and it is possible that this temple at Deogarh was also dedicated to Vishṇu under the same appellation.

CHAPTER II

TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE DURING THE GUPTA PERIOD

The Gupta Period has been called the golden age of ancient India. It has left a permanent impress on the political, cultural; scientific, religious, artistic and architectural activities of India and brought about a powerful revival of Hinduism which had begun to assert itself immediately after the palmy days of Buddhism during the reign of the great Mauryan Emperor Aśoka. The effect of this on the history of culture survived by about a century and a half the political supremacy of the Guptas which did not last beyond the 5th century A. D. In painting, as in sculpture, the art of this period is characterised by a balance and judicious restraint in composition, perfection of technique and boldness of execution which have scarcely been excelled. The art treasures of Ajantā and Bāgh, Bādāmi and Sittannavāsal, and sculptures of this period which have been found widely distributed over the whole of India and are rightly prized for their idealised expression—have elicited their due meed of praise from connoisseurs.

Architecturally also, this period marks the beginning of the two styles of temple architecture in India, *viz.*, the "Nāgara" and the "Drāviḍa" which were to develop into the great Indo-Aryan *śikharas* of the north and *vimānas*[1] of the south. Both styles are found side by side in the Durgā[2] and Lāḍkhān temples at Aihoḷe in the south, while the *śikhara* of the Deogarh and Bhītargāon temples is found to occur during the Gupta period, with the flat roof of the Sānchī, Tigowā, Bhumarā, Nachnā Kuṭhārā and other temples in Northern India. Gradually, during the mediaeval period, these two styles became distinctive of the north and south.

Of the early *śikhara* type the only lithic[3] example extant in Northern India is the Gupta temple at Deogarh. Though the upper part of its *śikhara* had long disappeared, I was fortunate in discerning recently over the outer vertical band of its elaborate door-frame the replicas, which presumably represent the profiles, of contemporary shrines (Pls. IV, VIII and IX, *a*). In essence, the Gupta temple appears to have been a straight-edged pyramid built in receding tiers, the large projection in the centre of each side, which accommodates a broad but deeply recessed niche enclosed by pilasters, being carrried up the spire on which the principal decorative element is the *chaitya*-window motif still extant on the east for a part of its height (Pls. III, VI and VII). Over the last course of the facing on this side three more courses, one diminishing above the other and completing the *chaitya*-window motif by capping it with the triangular, pointed piece showing a circular, bifoliate[4] medallion in the centre, have been fitted into the isometric drawing by taking actual measurements of the temple façade at this point and of its architectural members stacked in the compound. The conjectural restoration as given in Pl. V cannot therefore be far wrong in conveying an idea of its original shape or height. The profiles of the *śikhara* on the door-jambs also show *āmalakas* at the corners of the second storey and at the top (cf.

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[1] In Madhyabharat there are some *vimānas* such as Teli-kā-mandir in the Gwalior fort.

[2] The *śikhara* of this temple is generally considered to be a later addition.

[3] Another lithic but octagonal temple belonging to the late Gupta Period is at Muṇḍeśvarī in the Shāhābād District of Bihar, cf. R. D. Banerji, *Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture*, pp. 148-9, Pl. LXXVIII (a).

[4] Cunningham describes this as the beehive with projecting horns.

Pl. IV and Pl. IX, *a*). Here, then, is an already well-defined type of *śikhara* of the Gupta period, which with time grew taller, curvilinear, more perfected and elaborate. For reasons detailed below, I do not agree with Cunningham that because a few pillars were found on the basement there was originally a pillared portico on each of the four sides over the platform, or with R. D. Banerji that the whole platform was covered over with a flat roof. The sanctum, as remarked by Cunningham, occupied the centre of the nine squares into which the terrace over the basement was divided (Pl. II). Excavation of the plinth carried out by Daya Ram Sahni revealed at each corner the existence of a small square shrine so that together with the central cella this temple constitutes the earliest example in northern India of the *pañchāyatana* type. The basement with parapet surmounted by a heavy coping was decorated by two series of sculptured panels of which the smaller one was superposed over the larger one—two panels of the latter being still *in situ*. To give an idea of this important and beautiful temple I shall now describe it briefly.

The plinth, to which access is gained by a broad flight of steps rising from the centre of each side, measures 55′ 6″ square and has projecting at each corner a miniature shrine, 11′ square, of which only traces are now left, but the one at the south-west has disappeared altogether. Though very much ruined, the plinth must, no doubt, have risen to the level of the doorstep of the shrine which is about 9 feet above the level of the moonstones at the bottom of the flights of steps. Over this, the parapet would have risen to another 2 feet as shown in the conjectural restoration (Pl. V). Numerous pieces of its coping are stacked in the compound (Pl. XXVI, *d*).

The plinth consisted of four courses of plain mouldings which rise to a height of 3′ 8″ from the ground level and above them of a frieze which ran all round and contained rectangular panels carved in high relief separated one from the other by means of pilasters which are ornamented at the base and capital by the usual pot-and-foliage motif and at the centre by three-quarter lotus medallions and leaves (cf. Pl. XIX). From the centre of each side rose a grand flight of steps between which and the square corner shrines (of which only traces are now left) is a projection (Pl. VII) of which the third course is broken by a pilaster relieved on three sides. The upper courses of these projections are missing. The panels rise to a height of 6′ 4″ from the ground level and were, no doubt, followed by mouldings to harmonise with those at the base and a parapet which are no longer extant. To cover the vertical distance between the top of the panels *in situ* and the plinth of the sanctum, another 3′ 6″ of coursing would be needed. As the parapet round the plinth also accommodated a smaller series of panels about 1′ 2″ high it must have risen above the terrace by the height of the coping which is 1′ 6″. The vertical height of the terrace at the bottom of the door-sill of the sanctum would thus work to about 9′ 10″ above the moonstones and along the parapet to some 9′ 7″ by allowing a slope of 3″. This is shown in the conjectural restoration based on measurements of the courses and panels still *in situ* or those in the sculpture godown and compound of the temple.

The cella (*garbhagṛiha*) is a plain square (18′ 6″ × 18′ 6″) facing west, relieved by an exquisitely carved doorway and a broad and deep panelled niche (*rathikābimba*) framed by pilasters in the centre of each of the remaining sides (Pls. VI and VII). The entablature above the level of the doorway and niches shows a simple frieze of arched window pattern which runs all round. Over this, again, was projected on strong cantilever beams[1] (17″ × 12½″ to 14″ × 12½″ in section), four on each side[2], a deep and continuous flat canopy which effectively shaded the reliefs on the doorway and panels on the remaining sides without causing any obstruction to the view. The stones of the canopy, as well as the cantilever beams, are deeply embedded[3] into the walls and gradually taper outwards along their upper surface only. The joints between the stones of the canopy were seemingly covered with long, round topped, stones which fitted into grooves in the roofing slabs, while their rounded ends were fixed into shallow recesses of that shape cut into the walls at regular intervals immediately above the line of the canopy[4] (Pl. IV). A glance at the isometric projection (Pl. V) will show how incomplete and erroneous is the plan published by Cunningham[5]. Projections of the plinth, which occur uniformly between the flights of steps and corners on every side, the corner shrines and the moonstones at the bottom of steps excavated by Sahni were unknown to him. There was really no warrant for him to indicate the position thereon of four pillars on each side of the sanctum simply to account for the canopy which, he agrees, shaded the doorway and niches. More recently, Percy Brown has amplified Cunningham's plan into a restoration with a portico "projecting from each side of the central structure"[6] but without showing therein the projections of the plinth, the moonstones and the corner shrines. It appears that Banerji also could not refrain from amplifying Cunningham's plan in his own way. He was so much obsessed with the idea of a covered path of circumambulation in the early Gupta temple at Nachnā Kuṭhārā in the Ajayagarh State of Central India[7] that he stated that "It is now certain that in this temple also there was a covered path of circumambulation, one beam of which is still sticking out; but there were four entrances to it instead of one, and all of them were provided with small porches and staircases"[8]. Too much has evidently been made of what remains of the beams of the entablature and the shading canopy. Cunningham while thinking that the square pillars might have been of the porticos proposed by him, stated that "The other pillars are round, changing into 16 fluted sides, and it seems doubtful whether they belonged to this temple. But they have some of the characteristics of the Gupta style, such as the fluted sides and the flowered turnovers at the corners. It is possible, therefore, that they may have belonged to *toraṇas*,

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[1] One of these with a part of the roofing slab is seen projecting over the central portion of the east side to a length of 4 ft. ½ in. in Pl. VI, *a*.

[2] Those at the angles are uniformly 14″ × 12½″.

[3] The beams have a bearing of not less than 22 inches.

[4] This feature was also observed by Cunningham, cf. *C. S. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 105-6. The same device is used to cover the joints of the roofing slabs of the porch of the Lādkhān temple at Aihole, cf. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, Vol. I. Pl. XXXIII, fig. 3.

[5] *C. S. R.*, Vol. X, Pl. XXXIV.

[6] Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 60, Pl. XXXIII, fig. 6.

[7] This is now a part of the Vindhya Pradesh.

[8] R. D. Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas* (1933), p. 146.

or gateways of the courtyard of the temple".[1] There are only two large square pillars 9′ 1″ and 9′ 3½″ in height, but the third one (ht. 5′ 6″) is fragmentary (Pls. XII and XIII). Had there been a porch on each side one would expect at least 8 pillars[2], a number of lintels, capitals and bases of pillars, not to speak of any porch or *toraṇa* which may have stood in the open court. It may be stated in this connection that the cantilever beams were strong enough by themselves to have adequately supported a 5′ wide projecting canopy which would certainly have served the primary object of protecting the icons and reliefs, while at the same time allowing the doorway and the great panels to remain in full view even from below the plinth. That would not be possible if the pillars stood in front unless a votary came to the porch itself. There was thus no structural necessity of bringing in the porches. It is generally agreed that "when complete this building was unquestionably one of rare merit in the correct ordering of its parts, all alike serving the purpose of practical utility, yet imbued with supreme artistic feeling. Few monuments can show such a high level of workmanship, combined with a ripeness and rich refinement in its sculptural effect as the Gupta temple at Deogarh"[3].

Types of Gupta Temples

The following are the main types of early Gupta temples :—

(*a*) A cubical or square cell with flat roof preceded by a small porch on four square pillars, the distance between the inter-columniation at the centre being larger than at the ends such as those at Udayagiri[4] excavated in the time of Chandragupta II, Sānchī[5], Tigowā[6] and Eran[7]. This type was probably derived from the plain, rock-hewn temples.

(*b*) A cubical or square cell surrounded by a square *pradakshiṇāpatha* with flat roof as in the Pārvatī temple[8] at Nachnā Kuṭhārā, the Lāḍkhān[9] at Aihoḷe and the ruined temple[10] at Baigrām in the Dinājpur district of Bengal. The larger square is preceded by a small rectangular porch connected with a flight of steps in front. On three sides the *pradakshiṇāpatha* is lighted in these examples by a trellis in the centre but in the Nachnā Kuṭhārā temple the sanctum is dimly lighted by two small trellises in the side walls. In the Lāḍkhān there is a trellis of a different design on each side.

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[1] *Op.cit.*, p. 106. They could also have been associated with the smaller Gupta temple 56′ north of the main temple of which only a few courses of the basement have been revealed by excavation, or with a separate *maṇḍapa* if one stood in front.

[2] Corresponding to the pillars there should ordinarily have been as many pilasters, but excepting the pilasters which form the framing of the great niches which stand at a much higher level than the floor round the temple, there is no indication of them on the plain parts of any face, cf. Pls. VI and VII.

[3] Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 61.

[4] *C. S. R.*, Vol. X, Pl. XVI, 1.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 60-62, Pls. XVI & XX; Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 78, fig. 151 ; Sir John Marshall, *Monuments af Sanchi*, Vol. I, p. 57 and Vol. III, Pl. CXIV.

[6] *C. S. R.*, Vol. IX, pp. 42, 45-46, Pls. X & XII ; Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, Pl. VI.

[7] *C. S. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 82-89, Pls. XXV-XXX.

[8] *C. S. R.* Vol. XXI, pp. 95-97, Pl. XXV; Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 60.

[9] Coomaraswamy, *op. cit*, p. 79, fig. 148.

[10] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXI, p. 81, B. 7; *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Vol. VIII, p. 151.

(*b1*) A further elaboration of type (*b*) was the provision, above the sanctum, of a flat-roofed upper storey in the Pārvatī temple at Nachnā Kuṭhārā and Lāḍkhān at Aihoḷe.

(*c*) *Śikhara* temples, of which the various examples are furnished by the Śiva temple at Nachnā Kuṭhārā, the temples at Pathari[1] (C. I.) and Gop[2] (Kāṭhiāwād).

The Gupta temple at Deogarh may be regarded as an adaptation of type (*b1*). On the one hand it was a three-storeyed pyramid built in gradually receding tiers of which the best part of two storeys are still extant (Pls. III, VI and VII), so that it marks a further development in height above the two storeys as seen in the Pārvatī temple at Nachnā Kuṭhārā and the Lāḍkhān temple at Aihoḷe and on the other the transition between the storeys was gracefully brought about by introducing curvature at the points of juncture and slight batter noticeable in the first storey which may also be presumed for the two upper storeys. "In this example we see an effort to throw off the rudimentary and rather ineffective convention of the flat roof and to obtain some appearance of height". To begin with, the flatness was obviated by the introduction of a semi-torous moulding at different stages, but the height was obtained by an ingenious superimposition of the second storey which is also found in the early Gupta temples at Nachnā Kuṭhārā and elsewhere. Unlike them, however, here it was built without leaving an opening, the roof slabs of this storey being let into grooves[3] cut in the north and south walls at a height of 10′ 4″ above the roof of the first storey (Pl. III and top left). By this skilful omission of the opening the existence of an intermediate storey was camouflaged. Such a construction, typified in profile by bas-reliefs of temples on the jambs of its own doorways, would have been crowned by an *āmalaka* and finial, the *āmalaka* being also introduced to relieve the plainness of corners at suitable heights (Pl. IV and Pl. IX, *a*). An idea of such a temple is given in the conjectural restoration by closely following the existing height of its façade on the east, and also the profiles of temples referred to above (Pl. V). Allowing for a reasonable margin of error, the conjectural restoration, viewed as a whole, gives the impression of a structure which is at once ponderous, heavy as well as lofty. Such a type would answer well the description—*vistīrṇa-tuṅga-śikharaṁ śikhariprakāśam* of the sun temple as given in the Mandasor Inscription[4] of Kumāragupta and Bandhuvarman dated A.D. 437-38. The spacious and high plinth of the Deogarh temple contributes equally to its expanse (*vistāra*) and height (*tuṅga*) in the same manner as do the three storeys (with the shading canopy projecting round the first one) constituting the main structure. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the term, *śikhara*, used in the Gupta inscriptions and contemporary literature represented some such structure. The *śikhara*, in effect, was a heavy and ponderous structure which was beginning to be evolved not so much as a fabric with continuous outline rising in the manner of the Nāgara or Indo-Aryan *śikharas*—that is to say, as a tall,

1 Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*; *C. S. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 70-71, p. 82, fig. 191.

2 Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p.159.

3 That on the south is more prominent and regular.

4 *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, no. XVIII, verse 3.

curvilinear (*śukanāsa*) and light spire, but necessarily as a stepped pyramid in order to gain more height. Shorn of the crowning *āmalaka*, the flat roof of the early Gupta temples whether of one or two storeys—still characterised the Deogarh temple, and this feature, together with the comparative squatness of its *śikhara*, was emphasised by the necessary addition, round the first storey, of the 5′ wide shading canopy which was carried all round on cantilever beams[1]. While, therefore, the canopy made for expansion of the spire it was, no doubt, an ingenious substitute for the covered *pradakshiṇāpatha* which was a feature of the early Gupta temples of Pārvatī at Nachnā Kuṭhārā, Lāḍkhān at Aihoḷe and of the Baigrām temple in the Dinājpur district of Bengal. In effect, it was an adaptation of the covered *pradakshiṇāpatha* dictated by the necessity of removing the screening wall the presence of which would have prevented a full view in góod light of the richly carved and excellent doorframe and panels on the remaining sides which by their vivacity and mythology were intended to attract and inspire the highest reverence to the temple. That was also the purpose of the excellent reliefs built into the plinth. Cunningham[2] and after him Banerji[3] and Percy Brown[4] have all erroneously imagined the existence of a porch on each of the four sides simply because Cunningham wanted to explain the presence of two Gupta pillars found by him on the temple plinth. As a fact, however, the structure consists of a square sanctum with a pyramidal *śikhara* rising in the centre of the plinth to which access was gained by a flight of steps on each side terminating in a moonstone at the bottom. Excavations undertaken by Daya Ram Sahni revealed at every corner a square miniature shrine at the ground level. Altogether in several features, that is to say, in plan, in the pyramidal spire, the deep projecting canopy and the great panels on three sides in place of the lighting lattice such as is found in the Nachnā Kuṭhārā and Lāḍkhān temples, the Deogarh temple marks a distinct departure from the existing early Gupta shrines (Pls. II and V). And yet in the correct ordering of its parts, the exquisite carvings on the doorway and the great panels, the figure of Vishṇu seated on Ananta over the *lalāṭabimba* answering to that of Śiva in the Bhumarā temple[5], the position of the river goddesses high up the door alongside the lintel as in most of the early Gupta temples, the lion-headed dentil frieze above the doorway and that of the arched window pattern running all round, the single and bifoliate *chaitya*-window ornaments with or without deities etc. enshrined in them, the pot-and-foliage ornamentation on the pillars and, above all, the restraint and simplicity of design combined with the vividness of expression are in every way typical of the early Gupta art and architecture. Among the hundreds of Gupta Brahmanical temples, which were widely distributed from the Punjab in the north-west to Assam in the east and to the Kistna basin in the south, the Deogarh temple represents a type of which but few examples have survived. References to temples in the Gupta inscriptions and literature of the fifth century A. D., confined mostly to adjectives of beauty and height, are so vague and meagre that it is not possible to reconstruct anything like a true picture from them. And yet there is no special reason to

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1 See p. 6 *supra*.

2 *C. S. R.*, Vol. X. pp. 195-6.

3 R. D. Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

4 Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 60-61, pl. XXXIII, fig. 6.

5 *Memoirs of the Arch. Surv. Ind.*, no. 16, p. 5, Pl. III.

31 DG of Arch.

assume that in the numerous temples which dotted the whole of India, the *śikhara* type should not have existed side by side with the types represented by the plain square cella preceded by a porch, or by the further addition of a covered square *pradakshiṇāpatha* round the sanctum which, with flat roof, was of one or two storeys. Brick temples would generally not survive such a long period of time, while the lithic examples, though made of ashlar masonry with fine joints, were built dry without any mortar[1], so that the chances of their survival were bound to be limited.

Nevertheless, there are a number of Brahmanical brick shrines, widely distributed, and extending over a period of several centuries. Among them may be noted the temple at Bhītargāon in the Kanpur district, together with several later instances in the same neighbourhood and the adjoining district of Fatehpur, several temples at Sirpur, Kharod and Rājim in the Raipur district of Madhya Pradesh, but the latter series is somewhat later than the Bhītargāon temple, which is ascribed to the fifth century A D. However, with the exception of later examples, all of them resemble a tall, tower-like edifice rising in diminishing stages and standing on fairly high plinths. Their altitude is of a gradually stepped pyramid without even the suggestion of a curvilinear spire which later became such a pronounced feature of the Indo-Aryan *śikhara* temples. Internally also, the hollow of their square pyramid is stepped out in a corbelled fashion till at the top it becomes a narrow aperture for taking a cylindrical base for the crowning *āmalaka* (Pl. XXXII, *a-d*).

The early date of Deogarh temple is also borne out by the evidence of sculptures. In the words of Cunningham their excellence "has struck every one who has seen them, and from this superiority both in design and in execution I would infer the comparatively early date of the temple. It possesses also four out of the five[2] characteristics of Gupta style, which I have already noticed in the earlier examples at Sānchī, Udayagiri, Eran and Tigowā. But the fifth characteristic, the flat roof, has here been changed to a spire."[3] Without, however, considering the probable form and height of the *śikhara*, and merely from the fact of its occurrence, Cunningham, against his own better judgment on the sculptures and in the absence of any inscription about the temple known to him, concludes that it cannot "well be placed earlier than A. D. 600." R. D. Banerji, despite the two-line inscription discovered by Daya Ram Sahni[4] on one of the two large pillars, would not place the temple much earlier than A. D. 575, as he thought that the *śikhara* in northern India began towards the close of the sixth century A. D.[5]. He also thought that the characters of the inscription, referred to above, belong to the late sixth century[6]. On the other hand Sahni thought

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[1] In the Deogarh temple clamps were used to fasten the stones together, mark holes in Pl. VI.

[2] The common characteristic features of the early Gupta temples at Udayagiri, Eran, Sānchī, Tigowā, Nachnā Kuṭhārā, Bhumarā and some other temples are (1) their flat roof without spire, (2) prolongation of the door lintel beyond the ends of the jambs, (3) statues of the river goddesses Gangā and Yamunā guarding the entrance door, (4) continuation of the architrave of the portico as a moulding all round the building, (5) pillars with massive square capital and so forth.

[3] *C. S. R.*, Vol. X., p. 110.

[4] *A. P. R., H. & B. Mons., N. C.*, for the year ending March, 1918, pp. 8 and 12.

[5] *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 145.

[6] *Ibid.* p. 147. Against this view Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra, Government Epigraphist for India, writes : "I have carefully studied the palaeography of that two-line Deogarh pillar inscription. I would place it in the last quarter of the 5th century or the first quarter of the 6th century A. D. The tripartite form of *y* points to its early character, while the looped *m* and developed *r*, combined with the half-developed *mātrā* strokes would show later stages in the development of the script."

that "the discovery of an early Gupta epigraph on one of the columns lying in the Gupta temple and the style of the sculptures inserted in its walls proclaim it to be a monument of the early Gupta period. It may, therefore, safely be inferred that already in the Gupta period, temples with spires were not unknown." It is gratifying to note that Percy Brown[1] assigns it to *circa* 500 A. D. and his dating thus very nearly agrees with that of Daya Ram Sahni and myself. The difference in point of dating between Banerji and ourselves is only of about half a century and, in the absence of a definite proof to the contrary, I would, on the strength of the evidence set forth above, prefer to place it in the early part of the sixth century A. D.

1. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 60.

CHAPTER III

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE

Doorway

The entrance to the main shrine (9′ 9″) is pierced by a doorway 6′ 11″×3′ 4½″ (Pl. IX, *a*). Its frame, consisting of four raised facets running all round, is highly ornamented, the extreme dimensions being 11′ 8″×10′ 9″. At the lower end of each facet is a standing figure ; the first one of these is a haloed male figure (*pratihāra*) followed on each side by two female figures, the first one of which may represent his wife (*pratihārī*), while the second one holding a long garland may be an attendant of high rank to judge from the beautiful ornamentation and drapery (Pl. IX, *b* and *c*). At each of the outer ends of the frame stands a pot-bellied dwarf (*kīchaka*) upholding with both hands a squat pot of typical Gupta design showing turn-overs of luxuriant foliage at the corner, the pot itself being decorated with a festooned girdle. From the pot emerges a thick and graceful band of *dhatūrā* (*Fastuosa Linn*) foliage with fruit, here artistically conventionalised into the form of a creeper to suit the exigencies of composition (Pl. VIII) [1]. At the level of the lintel this band sweeps back 10″ in order to accommodate the standing figures of Gaṅgā on the proper right and Yamunā on left, each canopied by an umbrella and standing on their vehicles (*vāhanas*) the crocodile and the tortoise respectively (Pl. IX, *a*). On the next inner band immediately above the heads of the attendant female figures are depicted in front and on the side facets two temple façades one above the other (Pls. IV and IX, *a*). In the front opening of each of the lower façades is a standing male figure, one carrying a garland and the other a flower. In a similar position on both sides of the upper temple façades is a dancing dwarf or musician. Further up, this pilaster is chamfered first into an octagon covered with foliage and then to a sixteen-sided figure with concave fluting crowned by a pot-and-foliage capital (Pls. VIII, *a* and IX, *a*). Over this facet is a lintel ornamented with *chaitya*-window motifs resting on a dentil frieze and this, again, is surmounted by a similar frieze with dwarf atlantes and lion-heads alternating with countersunk panels of window pattern. The next inner band rising above the heads of female figures consists of six panels on each side which are alternately small and large in size, the former occupied by pairs of dwarfs and the latter by amorous couples in various attitudes. The horizontal portion of this band is ornamented between terminal *kīrttimukhas* with a row of flying celestial figures carrying garlands and flowers and converging from both sides in adoration towards the central figure of Vishṇu seated on Ananta in a panel projecting in the centre above the doorway (*lalāṭabimba*). The figure of Vishṇu is four-armed, holding *chakra* in his right and *śaṅkha* in the left hand, the remaining right hand being held in the *abhaya* pose, while the left is placed on the thigh. The suspended right foot of the god is being pressed with both hands by a female figure, presumably Lakshmī. To the right of Vishṇu stands a four-armed figure of Narasiṁha in adoration (*añjali-mudrā*) and to the left a dwarf or *gaṇa* with a crooked staff held up in his left hand.

[1] The perfect resemblance of the representation with the actual leaves and fruit of the *dhatūrā* (*Fastuosa Linn*) plant leaves little doubt as to the identification. Varāhamihira (6th century A. D.) describing temples in the *Bṛihatsaṁhitā* refers to *śrīvṛiksha* being one of the ornaments on the doorway.

The fourth or innermost band above the head of the haloed male figure on either side is framed along its outer edge by a delicate border of rosette pattern, but the inner part of this broad band shows an elaborate and graceful scroll of *japā* (*guḍhal* or *Hibiscus Rosa-sinensi*) creeper in bold relief emerging from the navel of a squatting, pot-bellied dwarf (Pls. VIII and IX, *a*). Intertwined in the tendrils of the creeper are four small nude figures representing Erotes.

A noteworthy feature of this doorway, which is also found in most of the early Gupta temples, *e.g.*, at Udayagiri, Sānchī and elsewhere, is that the river goddesses are placed high up alongside the ends of the lintel and not at the bottom of the door-jambs, a position which is always assigned to them in later temples. At Bhūmarā, however, the river goddesses stand at the lower ends of the jambs. It may be added that the original idea of a projecting lintel above the doorway has been skilfully turned in the early Gupta art into a beautiful framing. Above the doorway is a dentil cornice of lion-heads which, again, is surmounted by a frieze of window pattern running all round the temple (Pls. VI and VII).

Niches

Circumambulating from left to right there is a broad and deep niche, projecting from the centre of each side, encased in an elaborate frame (*rathikābimba*). Their effect is further enhanced by the simple yet graceful pilasters and lintel which materially add to their depth. The former have pot-and-foliage capitals but their bases differ from each other in the details of carving (Pls. X and XI, *b*). In each case, the two inner facets of the frame-work exhibit a foliated scroll rising from an auspicious conch placed head downwards and a band of rosette-and-leaf pattern respectively. This combination reminds of the auspicious *śaṅkha* and *padma* associated with doorways referred to in literature of the Gupta period.[1] The entablature above the niches is carved with creepers of which the ends are held in the centre by a flying *gaṇa*. (cf. Pl. XI, *b*). Immediately above this is a cornice of lion-dentils alternating with countersunk miniature windows which may be compared to the frieze of lion-dentils above the entrance to the shrine (cf. Pl. IX, *a*).

Gajendra-Moksha. The niche on the north side, measuring 5′×3′ 3½″, contains an alto-relievo of Gajendra-moksha (Pl. X, *a*). The scene depicts an elephant standsing helplessly in a lotus pond firmly bound by the coiled tails of a *Nāga* and *Nāgī*[2]. At this juncture comes his deliverance from dire distress by the intercession of god Vishṇu who appears seated on Garuḍa. Vishṇu is four-armed, the only surviving symbol is a mace in his right hand. The *Nāga* pair is now imploring forgiveness with hands joined in adoration, while the elephant is offering lotus flowers held in his uplifted trunk in thankfulness to the god. On a separate slab, at the top of the panel, is a crown in the centre held above the head of Vishṇu by a flying celestial

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[1] Kālidāsa in his *Meghadūta* describing the house of the Yaksha writes *dvār-opānte likhita-vapushau śaṅkha-padmau cha dṛishṭvā.*

[2] In *Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Skandha VIII, Adhyāya 2,* verses 25-27 the aquatic monster from whose grip the elephant is freed by Vishṇu is crocodile and not the *Nāga* and *Nāgī*. Cf. T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography,* Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 266-69, pl. LXX, fig. 1.

couple on either side.[1] In a semi-circular panel below the capital on each pilaster of this niche is a seated male figure holding flower with a female companion on either side.

Nara-Nārāyaṇa. The east side niche is 5′ 1″×3′ 11″. It depicts the great penance of Nara and Nārāyaṇa[2] seated under trees on rocks in a hermitage in which deer and lions are shown (Pls. XI, *a* and *b*)[3]. Nārāyaṇa, seated in *lalitāsana* on the proper right, has four hands, the right upper holds a rosary (*akshamālā*) but the lower one is held in *vitarka-mudrā* in front of his chest. The lower left hand holds a long-necked flask (*amṛita-ghaṭa*) but the object held in the upper hand cannot be made out though it may be a long stalked flower. To his left is Nara seated likewise with a rosary round the fingers of his right hand of which the thumb and fore-finger are held in contact[4], while the left suspended hand with palm outwards shows the index and middle fingers pointing downwards[5]. Nara and Nārāyaṇa both have matted hair tied into different chignons over their heads but a few locks are shown falling on their shoulders also. Completely lost in meditation, each wears a deer skin thrown across his left shoulder and arm (*ajina-yajñopavīta*) and close-fitting loin cloth secured by a waist-band.

Standing behind each is a bearded anchorite, and flying in the air above their heads is a garland-bearing celestial couple on either side between which, at the centre, is a flying female figure with both hands held together palm inwards as if showering flowers[6]. Like the panel on the north, in this, too, there is a separate relief at the top depicting Brahmā, seated on *kamalāsana* in the centre, flanked on each side by a flying celestial couple.[7] The right pilaster shows seated Gaja-Lakshmī in a semi-circular panel above the central band and an amorous couple in the corresponding panel on the other pilaster.

Anantaśāyī Vishṇu. The niche on the south side (4′ 11″×3′ 10″) depicts Anantaśāyī Vishṇu or Nārāyaṇa sleeping on the seven-hooded cosmic serpent Śesha forming a canopy over him (Pl. X, *b*). Lakshmī, sitting at the feet of Vishṇu, is shampooing his right leg. Behind her is Bhūdevī holding a *chāmara* (*chauri*), next stands Garuḍa in reverential mood holding in his left hand the hood of a snake coiled round his neck and with the right planted on the hip. Vishṇu, four-armed, wears an elaborate *kirīṭamukuṭa*, ear-rings (*kuṇḍalas*) set with three pearls, two necklaces—the

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[1] Cf. similar representations at Amarāvati, J. Burgess. *Amarāvatī and Jaggayyapeta Buddhist Stupas*, Pls. XVI, 3, and XLI, 1, and some other unpublished sculptures.

[2] Nara and Nārāyaṇa are together ascribed as the fourth incarnation of Vishṇu in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Skandha* XI, *Adhyāya* 4, Verse 6. The story of their austerities is described in detail in the *Bhāgavata* and other Purāṇas. For the iconographic details of Nara-Nārāyaṇa as given in the *Vishṇudharmottara* see, B. Ch. Sastri, "Identification of a Relief belonging to the Gupta Period at Deogarh", *Acta Orientalia*, Vol. XII (1934), pp. 116-125. Also see T.N. Ramachandran, "Fresh Light on the Deogarh Relief of Nara-Nārāyaṇa," *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXVII (1951), pp. 191-96.

[3] Even the animals in the forest seem to react to the serene and peaceful atmosphere of the panel. For similar effect, cf. a Dakshiṇāmūrti image of late Pallava workmanship in the Angālammā temple at Kāverīpakkam, North Arcot District.

[4] J. N. Banerjea calls it *jñāna-mudrā*. in his *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 278.

[5] Banerjea compares this pose of fingers with the Buddhist *bhūsparśa-mudrā*, where the palm, unlike the present one, is inwards. (*op. cit.*, p. 286).

[6] Ramachandran (*op. cit.* p. 193-4) identifies this figure with the nymph Urvaśī who was born from Nārāyaṇa's thigh.

[7] Along the right end of the panel the stone is broken in a slanting manner downwards so that instead of replacing the whole panel the artist had to cramp up figures in the space left to him on that side and to make up the background a corresponding piece had to be inserted there.

upper one of one string (*ekāvalī*) and the lower of three strings (*chandrahāra*), armlets (*keyūra*) and wristlets (*kaṅkaṇa*) and a long *vaijayantī* garland. The drapery consists of a sticking loin-cloth (*ardhoruka*) tied with a clasped string.

In the upper part of the panel is Brahmā seated in the centre on a full-blown lotus the stalks of which, not being connected with the navel of Vishṇu, presumably emerge from behind the coils of the cosmic serpent[1]. Kālidāsa in his *Raghuvaṁśa* (Canto XIII, 6), however, refers to Brahmā as seated on the lotus rising from the navel of Vishṇu and this is how he is usually depicted in later sculptures also. As in the Nara-Nārāyaṇa panel, Brahmā has four faces (of which three are visible) but only two hands as in the case of Śiva, of which the right one (now broken) was held up, while the left one holds the *kamaṇḍalu*. He wears a *mṛigacharma* (*ajinayajño-pavīta*) across his left shoulder. Flanking him to the right are the figures of Indra on Airāvata holding *vajra* in his right hand and Kārttikeya on peacock, and to left Hara-Gaurī on the Nandi bull racing in the sky followed close from behind by a flying garland-bearing figure. A crescent (*ardhendu*) is shown in the matted locks of Śiva.

Below the group is a separate piece (ht. 1′ 10″) showing six figures, five male and one female, standing in a row. All the male figures have curly hairs arranged in different styles: three of them wear *mukuṭas* and two crest jewels secured by bands. The central figure is drawing out a sword from the scabbard, and the one opposite to him wields a club in his right hand against his shoulder, the third or end figure on this side probably also held a *gadā*. The male figures on the left have their hands held in the pose of wrestlers. The female figure has done her hair in the form of a top knot, wears a *muktā-vaikakshaka*, a scarf (*uttarīya*), and a fine *dhotī* held with a four-stringed girdle (*mekhalā*). The four figures to proper left represent the *āyudha-purushas, viz.*, Kaumodakī, Sudarśana, Śārṅga and Nandaka and the last of these is fighting the two demons (*asuras*) Madhu and Kaiṭabha.

The right hand side pilaster shows, seated within a semi-circular panel, four-armed Gaṇeśa holding rosary and the broken tusk in his right hands and battle-axe (*paraśu*) and bowl of sweet balls (*modakas*) in the left hands. On either side of him is a tiny figure (*gaṇa*), the one to left supporting a basket filled with additional balls. The corresponding panel in the other pilaster shows a seated male figure with flowers in his right hand and a standing *gaṇa* besides.

Description of the panels of the plinth

Two panels adjoining each other in the left hand side corner of the steps to the entrance of the shrine are still *in situ*, above the fourth course (Pl. VII, *b*). They help

[1] Gopinatha Rao has also illustrated this panel in his *Elements of Hindu Inconography*, Vol. I, Pl. XXXII, and described it on pp. 110-12. He is incorrect in stating that Brahmā is seated on lotus issuing from Vishṇu's navel as the lotus stalk is not connected with it. Again, he described the figure shampooing Vishṇu's right foot as Bhūmidevī and identified Lakshmī with the right-end figure of the bottom group. Caressing of Vishṇu's foot is usually done by Lakshmī. The two standing figures at the foot of Vishṇu are identified by him as *āyudhapurushas* representing respectively the *gadā* and *dhanush*. In effect, however, the left hand figure is Bhūdevi holding a *chauri* and the right hand one, Garuḍa with the snake coiled round his neck.

Similarly, Gopinatha Rao's interpretation that on the lower slab are depicted Lakshmī at the right end and followed on the left by three *āyudhapurushas* representing the *Chakra*, *Saṅkha* and *Khaḍga* should really be taken to represent the four principal *āyudhas* of Vishṇu all personified (*āyudhapurushas*), *viz.*, Kaumodakī (club) at the extreme right, followed by Sudarśana-chakra (discus), Śārṇga-dhanush (horn bow), and Nandaka-khaḍga (sword), the last one attacking the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha.

in showing accurately how the panels originally stood. In addition to these, two smaller ones on the projections of the plinth forming the third course on the west and east sides are also *in situ* (Pl. XXIV, *b* and *c*). For convenience and clarity I shall describe the various reliefs connected with the Rāma and Kṛishṇa cults, as far as possible, in chronological order and various other reliefs and fragments of a religious or secular character thereafter. The panels that are still *in situ* will be so indicated in the text, since most of the others are in the sculpture godown which was constructed to the east of the temple compound and some others including certain architectural pieces, which are noticed later, are still lying in the compound.

Rāmāyaṇa Scenes

R. 1: *Rāma redeeming Ahalyā from her curse* (2′ 9″×1′ 11″). It shows three male figures and one female (Pl. XV, *a*). Of the former, one is an old ascetic seated on a raised seat at the extreme right and telling the rosary held in his right hand, and in a corresponding position on the left a youth holding a long bow in his left hand. Between them, in the centre background, stands another youth also with a bow in his left hand. At the feet of the seated youthful figure squats a lady in an extremely reverential attitude offering him a flower with her right hand while he is touching her head with the right hand so as to bless her. The scene is laid amid trees with dense foliage in the hermitage of Gautama. Very likely it represents the deliverance of Ahalyā (*Ahalyā-uddhāra*) by Śri Rāma from the curse of her husband who during his absence had discovered her seduction by Indra in the garb of an ascetic in his own form, and condemned her to a life of rigorous solitude in the grove till she was freed from it by the visit of Śrī Rāma[1]. This event took place when the latter was accompanied by his brother Lakshmaṇa and teacher Viśvāmitra on the occasion of his journey to Mithilā. All the three male figures show extreme gratification at the deliverance of Ahalyā from the above curse, while the latter is full of gratefulness to her saviour.

R. 2: *Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmaṇa going into exile* (2′ 6″×1′ 9″). The panel shows three figures, two male and one female, walking side by side,[2] the former carrying bows (Pl. XV, *b*). Although the heads of the male figures are broken, the scene evidently depicts the going into exile (*vana-gamana*) of Rāma, Lakshmaṇa and Sītā.

R. 3: (2′ 9″×1′ 9″) depicts three male and two female figures in a grove; those at the extreme ends are males seated on rocky eminences, while the third male figure holding a bow stands between them. In the centre foreground are two women, one seated at the feet of the left hand male figure and the other standing behind with her hands placed on the head of the former. In the lower ground to the right are shown two peacocks. The scene may, perhaps, be identified with the visit of Rāma, Lakshmaṇa and Sītā to the hermitage of the sage Atri who is seated at the extreme right (Pl. XVI, *a*). The *rishi* with matted hair and a broad scarf across the chest (which being hachured may be a *valkala*) is holding a book in his left hand, while his

[1] R. T. H. Griffith, *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*, Vol. I, Canto 48, pp. 211-14.

[2] In Griffith's translation of *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*, Canto XI, Sītā is described as walking between Rāma and Lakshmaṇa.

right hand, which was doubled and raised possibly in the attitude of teaching, is broken. Next to him stands Lakshmaṇa at ease resting on his bow, while Rāma is seated on the left. Between them stands Anasūyā (wife of the sage) who has lovingly placed her hands on the head of Sītā who is seated in the act of adoring her with *mālya* and *aṅgarāga*[1].

R. 4[2] shows *Lakshmaṇa mutilating Sūrpaṇakhā in the presence of Rāma and Sītā* (2′ $8\frac{1}{2}$″ × 1′ 9″). It has already been identified with the well known scene, in the Pañchavaṭī forest, of Lakshmaṇa cutting off the nose and ears of the female demon Śūrpaṇakhā[3] (Pl. XVII, *a*). At the extreme right is seated Rāma with his long bow in the left hand and raising the right one (which is broken) probably ordering Lakshmaṇa to deform Śūrpaṇakhā, but Sītā stands terrified between the two with her right hand placed on the breast and the left with the thumb and next finger doubled up and the remaining three pointing to Śūrpaṇakhā. Lakshmaṇa, holding a sword in his upraised right hand and the hair of Śūrpaṇakhā in his left is about to mutilate her.[4]

R. 5 : *Rāma shooting an arrow and Lakshmaṇa stringing his bow* (2′ 1″ × 1′ 9″). It depicts two male figures in a forest typified by an *Aśoka* tree (Pl. XVI, *b*). The figure on the proper left is of full-grown stature shown in the act of shooting an arrow from a bow, and beside him is a youthful archer stringing his bow. The head of the former is broken and that of the latter shows matted hair. Both wear the *chhannavīra* ornament and short loin cloth. The larger figure also wears a scarf which is tied round the waist and is hanging down from the thigh. It has been suggested by D. R. Sahni[5] that the pair represents Rāma and Lakshmaṇa. If the smaller figure is Lakshmaṇa, probably standing as a guard, the scene might possibly refer to the incident of Rāma's killing Rākshasas in the Daṇḍaka forest, despatched by Khara at the instance of Śūrpaṇakhā.[6]

R. 6 : *Abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa* (height 1′ 2″). It shows the bust of a female figure with mutilated face. Her gaze is that of a terrified person. From over her right shoulder is seen the arm of a gigantic figure presumably male, in the act of forcibly seizing her. As the existing height of the sculpture is 1′ 2″ and the panel presumably accommodated also a giant male figure, it is likely that the woman had fallen on the ground and the male figure had to stoop to lift her. If so, the scene may be taken to represent the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa[7]. The piece is, however, too fragmentary to allow of anything more than a mere surmise.

R. 7: *Garlanding of Sugrīva by Lakshmaṇa in the presence of Rāma* (1′ 3″ × 1′ 2″). It shows three standing figures ; the two to left, each carrying a bow and wearing *chhannavīra*, are Rāma and Lakshmaṇa and the third one, which has a monkey face,

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[1] *Ayodhyā Kāṇḍa*, Sargas 117-18.

[2] According to Cunningham this was corner panel in the south face and the next one also stood on that face. Cf. *C. S. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 108-9.

[3] *C. S. R.*, Vol. X, p. 109 and D. R. Sahni, *A. P. R., H. & B. Mons., N. C.* 1918, p. 7.

[4] Griffith, *Rāmāyaṇa*, Book III, Canto 18.

[5] *A. P. R., H. & B. Mons., N. C.*, 1918, p. 7.

[6] Cf. Grffith, *op. cit.*, pp. 303-4.

[7] Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 345-46.

is Sugrīva (Pl. XVII, *b*). Lakshmaṇa holds a garland in his hands intended for the monkey chief which is then shown actually round the neck of the latter. Sugrīva, it may be pointed out, was the monkey chief whose alliance was valuable in Rāma's fight against the demons. The scene represents the garlanding with *gajapushpī* (also known as *nāgapushpī*) of Sugrīva by Lakshmaṇa before he was sent to face his brother, Vāli in mutual combat.[1]

R. 8 : (1′ 4″×1′) (Pl. XVII, *c*). This panel is broken transversely from top to bottom. The existing portion shows four figures. Of these, one is the monkey king Sugrīva reclining on the ground, facing left, lost in the trance of merriment and intoxication of wine, and holding a flower in his right hand. Behind him stands Rumā, his wife, and seated to her right is a young man (much mutilated), presumably Aṅgada, his nephew, both of whom are urging Sugrīva with their hands to rise up and receive with due courtesy Lakshmaṇa whose figure is broken away. To the left of Rumā stands Hanūmān joining in the same counsel so as to pacify the wrath of Lakshmaṇa and assure him of ready help in the recovery of Sītā.[2]

R. 9 : *Rāvaṇa threatening Sītā in the Aśoka-vāṭikā* (2′ ×1′ 6″). This panel is extremely fragmentary and shows the torso of a large male figure standing on the right in a very threatening attitude and close to him a female figure whose face and part of the lower legs are missing (Pl. XVII, *d*). From her pose she appears to be turning away from the giant male figure. The scene possibly represents Rāvaṇa in angry mood in the Aśoka-vāṭikā at Sītā's defiance to meet his advances.[3] In view of the very fragmentary nature of the scene the suggestion is merely tentative.

R. 10 : (10″×1′ 5″) (Pl. XVII, *e*). This fragment depicts a monkey figure in flight upholding a mountain, possibly Hanūmān carrying a peak of the Himālaya with *Mṛita-sañjīvanī* herb in order to revive Lakshmaṇa from the swoon into which he had fallen while fighting with Meghanāda.[4].

Kṛishṇa scenes

M. 1: *Birth story of Kṛishṇa* (2′ 7″×1′ 8″). It shows a female and a male figure standing side by side, the former in the act of handing over a male child to the latter (Pl. XVIII, *a*). The scene may be identified as the birth-story of Kṛishṇa, who immediately after he was born inside a prison at Mathurā is stated to have been transferred by his father Vasudeva to the care of his friend Nanda at Gokula in order to save the child from the homicidal wrath of Kaṁsa, the king of Mathurā[5]. The expression on the face of the lady (Devakī) is of regretful parting with the child but that of Vasudeva shows satisfaction with his mission to save the baby.

M. 2 : The panel showing *Nanda and Yaśodā fondling Baladeva and Kṛishṇa* (2′ 7″×1′ 9″) *in situ* abuts to the north of the corner formed by the flight of steps

[1] Cf. *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa*, Sarga 12, 39-40.
[2] *Ibid.*, Sarga 31.
[3] Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 489.
[4] *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, Yuddhakāṇḍa*, Sarga, 74
[5] Cf. *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, Pt. V., Canto 3.

leading to the entrance of the shrine. It shows a male and a female figure standing side by side, each with a male child held in the arms. The female figure wears a long tunic (*kurtā*) open along the left side and a long flowing skirt (*āprapadīna*, modern *lahangā*). Her head is covered with a thick *orhni* in the fashion of a typical Panjabi *jhummā*, the ends of which are tied in a knot (Pl. XIX, *a*). The male figure with mutilated face wears a necklace and armlets, a prominent scarf girdling the finely creased loin-cloth. Behind him is a humped bull and behind the female figure are two cows, all seated. The figures seem to represent Nanda, chief of the cowherds and his wife Yaśodā carrying in their arms the pair of divine children, Baladeva and Kṛishṇa.[1]

M. 3 : *Bust of Nanda fondling Kṛishṇa* (1′ 4″×11″). This fragment merely shows at the right hand side the bust (with broken face) of a standing male figure fondling a male child held in both hands (Pl. XXI, *d*). In front of him are traces of the lower end of a skirt which indicates that a female figure stood alongside. In the style of hair and details of ornamentation the figure is similar to that of Nanda in M. 2 (Pl. XIX, *a*). It is therefore not unlikely that this represented the fondling of Śrī Kṛishṇa by his foster parents after his removal from prison to Gokula.

M. 4 : *Kṛishṇa hurling a cart* (2′ 6″×2′). It depicts a child lying on a small cushioned cot shown in the act of hurling aloft with his left leg a rectangular box-like cart full of jars (presumably containing milk, curd and butter) which are shown to have toppled.[2] The child holds by the neck a peacock in his right hand. To the left of this scene stands, completely bewildered, a lady with her right hand held to the chin expressive of great emotion. The other hand is placed on the thigh (Pl. XVIII, *b*). The lady, be it noted, wears the same long tunic, skirt and *jhummā* as her counterpart in M. 2 (Pl. XIX, *a*). The scene is undoubtedly to be identified with *śakaṭalīlā* of Śrī Kṛishṇa and is one of his well known childish pranks of supernatural power. Yaśodā, being a cowherd woman, is shown with dress appropriate to persons of her class and this makes an obvious contrast with the princely dress of Devakī in M. 1 (Pl. XVIII, *a*). Devakī is shown wearing a *muktāvaikakshaka*, a scarf (*uttarīya*) and a lower garment (*antarīya*) on which is an elaborate girdle (*mekhalā*) of five strings. She wears lotus ear-rings, elaborate armlets, bracelets and anklets. Her hair is arranged in small spiral curls round the forehead and is also combed back in large tresses in the form of a chignon the lower end of which is again shown falling over the right shoulder and is doubled up in padded formation.

M. 5 : *Kṛishṇa seizing Kaṁsa by hair* (1′ 2″×3½″). Small fragment showing the head of a male figure whose dishevelled hair has been firmly caught by the arm of another figure no longer extant. (Pl. XXI, *c*). This may be connected with the killing of Kaṁsa whom Kṛishṇa is said to have seized by the hair and hurled down[3].

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[1] The adjoining panel showing the proud king Bali and Vāmanāvatāra is described at p. 19 *infra* so as to allow of the cultwise description in chronological order as far as possible.

[2] Cf. *Vishṇu Purāṇa*., Pt. V., Canto 6, I. 6.

[3] Cf. *ibid.*, Canto 20, verses 86-88

M. 6 : *Woman concealing her breasts.* It shows the torso of a nude figure covering her breasts with both hands, possibly connected with the stealing of clothes of the Gopīs (*chīraharaṇa*) by Kṛishṇa (Pl. XXI, *a*).

M. 7 : (1′ ×9″). The fragment shows the torso of a female figure wearing a long *kurtā* and skirt similar to those worn by Yaśodā in M. 2 (Pl. XXI, *e*). Her right hand is raised up as if to support something held over head which is no longer extant but which from the oblique position of the two breasts may be presumed to have been slightly tilted to the right. The figure possibly represented a cowherd woman.

M. 8 : (1′ 10″×2′ 1″) *Kṛishṇa receiving his friend Sudāmā.* Kṛishṇa in the centre is elegantly attired, wearing his hair in a gorgeous wig of flowing *alakāvalī*. To his left stands Sudāmā, his Brāhmaṇa friend, leaning on his crooked staff. To Kṛishṇa's right stands his wife Rukmiṇī bewildered at his unexpected freedom with the Brāhmaṇa (Pl. XIX, *c*).

The above panels offer earliest sculptural evidence of the popularity of the Kṛishṇa story in the Gupta period.

Vishṇu and his avatāras

V. 1 : (height 1′ 10″ ; length 1′ 8″). Vishṇu shaded by a seven-hooded snake canopy. Lower portion from waist downwards broken (Pl. XXII, *a*). He has four hands all of which are broken, only the *chakra* in the right hand remaining ; wears a high *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* profusely ornamented, of which the upper edge shows a fillet of flowers. The frizzled locks of hair fall on both shoulders.

V. 2 : (1′2½″×1′ 2½″). Vishṇu (head and shoulders preserved) wearing elaborately adorned *mukuṭa* below which the hair frizzles are shown falling in four tiers. This is a very imposing figure (Pl. XXII, *b*).

V. 3 : (1′ 4½″×1′ 4½″). Head and bust of Vishṇu wearing an elaborately ornamented *mukuṭa* adorned with pearl festoons and floral patterns. Heavy locks of frizzled hair falling on shoulders (Pl. XXII, *d*).

V. 4 : (height 10½″). Torso. To judge from the ornament round the neck of V. 3 it is likely to have been that of Vishṇu (Pl. XXIII, *b*).

V. 5 : (*in situ*, 2′8″×2′). Shows four figures three of which are mutilated (Pl. XIX, *b*). Of the two principal figures, the right hand one is seated on a raised *chaukī* slightly tilted, and the other is standing with his left foot firmly implanted on the ground and the hand resting on the hip, while the right leg is kept aslant. Between the two principal figures is the bust of a young ascetic figure which seems to spring from the right hip of the standing giant figure. The person seated on the throne wears a crown and other ornaments. His right hand seems to be raised in wonder and the left leg is supported by a dwarf attendant. Though much mutilated, the scene probably depicts the story of Vishṇu in his Vāmana incarnation.

If this be correct, the figure on the right represents king Bali with the young Brahmachārin, Vaṭu-Vāmana, in front of him begging space equal to three strides. The boon having been granted, the latter has now transformed himself into his expanded divine form to the utter discomfiture of the proud king Bali.

V. 6 : (height 2′2½″, l. 3′3″). Narasiṁha in a *chaitya* window which projects from a rectangular background crowned by a *kīrttimukha* emitting creepers. This presumably crowned the third storey pediment on one side. The god is seated on a full blown lotus and has *gadā* and *chakra* in his right hands, *śaṅkha* in the upper left hand, while the lower left is resting on the thigh. To his left is a seated worshipper with folded hands. At each of the dips of the bifoliate medallion is a *śaṅkha*, the outer ends of the triangle being ornamented with floral arabesque (Pl. XXII, *c*).

Miscellaneous reliefs

S. 1: (height 1′). Torso like that of No. 21 showing a beaded torque. As it wears a snake prominently round the neck it is likely to have been the bust of Śiva.

S. 2 : (height 1′ 4″). Upper half of a haloed four-armed female figure wearing matted locks of hair and deer skin over her left shoulder (Pl. XXIII, *d*). All the hands are broken. Probably Svayaṁprabhā[1] who is described in the *Rāmāyaṇa* as an effulgent female ascetic wearing black deer skin (*kṛishṇājināmbarā*) and is a companion of the nymph (*apsarā*) Hemā. Hanūmān met her on his way to Laṅkā in quest of Sitā.

Reliefs on projections of the plinth

P. 1: (length 3′ 1″×height 11″×side 10″). There is a frieze of window pattern *in situ* on the south projection of the west face of the plinth at the level of the third course between the flight of steps and the corner shrine on that side. The frieze consists of eleven windows, *viz.*, two on each of the side facets and seven in front (Pl. XXIV, *b*). The extreme end ones, which are empty, are arched and the adjoining ones rectangular. The rectangular side windows and each of the three sunk arched windows in front contain a woman standing with four rectangular raised panels between them, each containing *dampatī* figures. The figures of solitary women stand in various attitudes but the one at the south side facet has her left hand placed on the head of a small boy standing to her left. On the front face the *dampatī* scenes show from left to right first the husband and wife standing side by side in an amorous attitude, the man having placed his left arm on the shoulder of the female. The next panel, which rather skilfully causes a delusion as to the legs of the male and female figures, shows the woman, with her left leg crossed behind the right one, completely reclined against the male figure round whom she entwines her right arm. The male, too, fondles the breast of the female with his right hand and embraces her with the other. In the next panel they stand up side by side embracing each other. Then, again, in the next panel the woman has completely reclined against the man this time with head bent forward, the left hand being placed on the scarf of the man's

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[1] *Rāmāyana, Kishkindhā Kāṇda*, Sargas 51-52.

dhotī and the other doubled and supported by the man's right hand while his other hand holds up the end of the *dhotī* of the female companion.

P. 2 : (length 3′ 2″ × height 10″ × side 6″). The next frieze *in situ* on the northern projection of the east face shows nine panels, *viz.*, one at each side and seven in front consisting of four raised panels alternating with three sunk ones. Of the three sunk panels two show foliated scroll and the central one the bust of a lady under an arched window (Pl. XXIV, *c*). Of the two females at the side facets the one looking south is plucking flowers with her right hand from a tree under which she is standing, while the corresponding figure facing north is holding a twisted garland with both hands. The four raised facets in front show *dampatī* figures. The figures to right show the man in a coaxing attitude while the woman is indifferent, but in the next panel, the man is turning away and the woman embracing from behind clings to him. Curiously, with the third scene where the relative position of the couple is reversed, the woman seems to be declining the man's advances, but in the fourth scene they seem to have reconciled with each other and are shown in embrace.

P. 3 : (length 4′ 2″ × height 7″ × side 1″). This is a carved frieze from one of the projections of the plinth (Pl. XXIV, *a*). It shows four pilasters between which there are three arched window motifs in front and one at each of the side facets also each with a beaded border. Supporting each pilaster is a pair of fat dwarfs seated side by side, this motif being commonly employed in this manner in early architecture also.

P. 4 : (1′ 8½″ × 1′ 3″). This panel shows a couple in an amorous attitude (Pl. XXIII, *c*). The female figure looking left stands on her left foot with the right doubled up and placed on the hip of her male companion who has embraced her from behind. His left hand touches the chin of the female companion. A male figure to left stands at ease holding a flower in the right hand above the shoulder and the left at the hip over the scarf. He has frizzled hair, of which the locks are shown falling on the left shoulder, and wears discoid ear-rings, necklace, armlets and wristlets.

P. 5 : (1′ 11″ × 1′ 4″). Panel showing a male figure standing by a pilaster holding with both hands a chevroned object which may be a rope or leather. He wears a wig of concentric semi-circles, a two stringed necklace, armlet (*nāga-valaya*), wristlet and girdle. The scarf is hanging down loosely in front.

P. 6 : (1′ 9″ × 1′ 1″). Panel showing *dampatī* pair, the head of the male figure to right being broken. The male figure stands reclining with his left arm against the right shoulder and head of his female companion. In order to hold his left arm in that position he has interlocked the forefinger and thumb of both hands. The female is standing with a flower in her right hand and the flowing scarf in the left.

P. 7 : (1′ 6½″ × 1′ 1″). *Dampatī* couple (Pl. XX, *d*). The male on the left is resting his right arm on the shoulder of his female companion who gazes towards him with eyes half-closed; her left arm, not being indicated, was presumably in embrace

from behind. The male figure holds a flower in his left hand held at the shoulder. It will be noticed that the wig of the male figure, except for the frontal protuberance, is similar to that of the figure in P. 5, while the beads of the female's girdle hang in semi-circular festoons like that of the female figure in P. 6.

P. 8 : (2′×1′ 11″). Shows five female figures standing, the central one dancing and the other four, two on either side, engaged in playing on musical instruments. On each of the narrower sides is a pot-bellied dwarf supporting the entablature (Pl. XXV, *a*, upper).

P. 9 : (2′×1′ 11″). Similar to the above, but the dance is in full swing (Pl. XXV, *a*, lower).

P. 10 : (3′ 5″×1′ ½″). Depicts three separate scenes (Pl. XXV, *b*). To proper right is a group of three figures showing a loving couple with a female attendant to right. In the centre stands a tall lady with graceful mien profusely ornamented. Her left hand is placed on the hip and the right at the shoulder but the object held in it is broken. To her left is the male figure who has placed his right hand on the shoulder of the lady and the left on his flowing scarf which has somewhat slipped down in excitement. It may be noted that the principal lady stands on her left leg with her right crossed from behind, and the legs of the attendant female figure are also held in the same pose. The middle scene shows a couple seated on a low seat. The left hand of the male figure to right is in embrace of the female companion, while his right holds a wine cup in front of his chest. The woman reclines on her right hand which is lovingly placed on the doubled leg of the man and her left hand holds what may be a fan. The wig worn by male figures in these scenes is similar to that on the male figure in P. 5 and P. 7. The third scene on the left shows five female figures of whom the central one is dancing and the remaining four are playing on musical instruments, such as *mṛidaṅga*, cymbals, etc.

P. 11 : (2′ 7″×1′ ½″). The scene consists of two male figures seated side by side on rocky seats in a grove represented by two trees with conventionalised foliage (Pl. XX, *a*). Each figure has placed his doubled right leg on the seat while the left one is resting on the ground, and holds a club, the right one in his right hand and the left one in his left. The left hand of the former holds a flower, while the right hand of the left one is placed on the knee. In a sunk panel to the left is a knotted creeper, the rest of the panel being broken.

P. 12: (1′ ½″×11½″). This is broken along the left lower corner (Pl. XX, *b*). It shows three figures, a lady in the centre holding her left hand at the breast with a male figure on either side, each with a club in his outer hand. The male figures with staring eyes are in a threatening mood, the right hand one having actually placed his hand on the adjoining shoulder of the female figure.

P. 13 : (5′×1′ ½″). This consists of five panels, three raised and two countersunk (Pl. XX, *c*). Beginning from right, the first panel has altogether disappeared, but to judge from the scenes on the remaining two raised panels, it is likely that two

warriors stood in this side by side. Then follows a countersunk panel showing a regardant seated peacock with foliated tail. The central panel shows two warriors each with a club in his right hand and with left foot of the right hand figure interlocked with the right one of the other ready to strike each other in actual combat. The next countersunk panel shows a quincunx of *svastikas* posed obliquely. The third raised panel, which marks the end of the combat, shows that each warrior struck a mortal blow at the other and both dropped down dead on the ground in opposite direction each with the mace by his side.

The above three panels seem to portray the story of Sunda and Upasunda, sons of Nikumbha, born of the family of Hiraṇyakaśipu. Having performed great penances they were granted a boon by the god Brahmā which made them immune from being killed by anyone except each other. They were therefore very conceited and proud of their prowess and began to harass the gods, *ṛishis* and mortals at whose combined request Brahmā devised a means to kill them in mutual combat. He therefore instructed Viśvakarmā to create an extraordinarily beautiful damsel (in the form of Tilottamā). She approached the two brothers who vied with each other to have her. As she was caught by both of them by the arms, Sunda, the elder brother, asked Upasunda to treat Tilottamā as his mother, but the latter said she was his wife and as such should be like a daughter to him. This led to mutual combat resulting in the annihilation of both. The first part of the story shows them seated at ease on rocky eminences after winning the boon from Brahmā and establishing themselves in the world. Then follows their struggle to win over Tilottamā and since there was no agreement as to who should have her, the actual combat is depicted in the next scene which ended in their mutual destruction as shown in the finale where they lie dead by the side of each other in opposite directions. The story is related in the Ādiparva of the *Mahābhārata*, Sargas 229-32[1].

Architectural members

A. 1 : This is divided into five panels, of which the middle and end ones show windows each with the bust of a woman (Pl. XXV, *c* lower). Between them in each of the raised panels with beaded border stands a dwarf, the right one playing on cymbals and the left one on a drum.

A. 2 and A. 3 : (3′ 5″×2′ 8″×1′ ½″). These are similar to A.1, and show four panels, *i.e.*, two with busts of women in windows and two with dwarfs standing or dancing (Pl. XXV, *c*, upper).

A. 4 : (2′ 1″×1½″). This is broken at the right side and consists of three panels. In the central panel is a lady wearing a heavy wig seated in a window and there is a dancing dwarf in each of the adjoining panels.

A. 5 : (2′ 1″×11″). This, again, is broken at the right and shows only two panels, one with the bust of a woman and the other with a dancing dwarf.

[1] T. R. Krishnacharya's Edition, Bombay, 1906.

Fragments

F. 1: (1′ 1″×1′). Shows torso of a male figure holding something with both hands at his breast. To his left is the blurred figure of an attendant.

F. 2 : (9″×9½″). The upper part shows the bust of a young male figure wearing *chhannavīra*, a heavy wig with semi-circular concentric frizzles of hair and protuberance in front. Both hands are broken and it is not clear what is indicated behind his left shoulder.

F. 3 : (9″×8″). Panel showing the lower part of a female figure, similar to that of Yaśodā, wearing long flowing skirt, with a bovine leg to her left.

F. 4: Torso of a female figure wearing *kurtā* and a *lahangā* or pleated skirt as worn by Yaśodā in M. 2.

Chaitya-window motifs on the śikhara

There are numerous fragments and some entire pieces of the *chaitya*-window motifs lying in the compound of the temple and some also in the sculpture godown. As the compound is crowded with other temples, and there is a later Gupta one to north, a number of architectural pieces belong to that shrine also. It is not always easy to distinguish stray architectural pieces of one from the other.

A flat piece (L. 4′, ht. broken, side 1′ 7″, circular medallion with lion head 7½″ diameter) with dentil cornice along the lower edge and a lion head in each of the two *chaitya* windows (Pl. XXVI, *c*). It is a complete central piece sloping on the sides. There is a rough tenon at its top in front of which there are traces of two broken windows and along its back dowel holes for binding it to the core.

Chaitya-window (height 2′ 6″) showing a celestial flying to right with a garland in a leafy receptacle in his left hand of which the upper part is held with his right hand. The folds of his scarf are flying about realistically in the air and so also a heavy flowery roll over his head.

Chaitya-window (L. 2′ 10″, broken to left) showing a corpulent seated figure in the medallion.

Chaitya-window (ht. 1′ 6″ without tenon, half L. 2′ 5″). Broken to left. The pilaster along the broken edge would come in the centre so that originally there were two bifoliate *chaitya*-windows side by side. In the existing complete window is a corpulent figure with elaborate headdress on an ornamented raised seat looking left.

Vidyādhara couple flying to right (L. 3′ 4″, ht. 1′ 6″ without tenon, Pl. XXVI, *b*). The female is supported on the right leg and arm of the male. Half *chaitya*-window with pilaster to proper right. This piece is very artistic. Broken to left.

Later Gupta panels

L. G. 1 : (2′ 3″×4′, the carved portion being 2′ 9″ long). This shows two amorous couples, each standing inside a niche separated by a pilaster. The vertical

rectangular groove ($5\frac{1}{2}'' \times 2''$) on the left cut into a rough surface indicates that this panel was placed in the corner and into its groove was fitted the tenon of the adjoining panel No. L. G. 2.

L. G. 2 : ($3' 4'' \times 2' 3''$). This consists of two niches with standing figures separated by a pilaster (Pl. XXVI, *a*). The right hand one shows an amorous couple and a dwarf attendant reclining on a staff with both hands. In the left niche is posed a couple, the woman with a *chaurī* in her right hand and the man with a flower bud, while the male attendant holds a flower in his right hand and a handled bag or basket in the left.

On grounds of style, design and superficial relief these two appear to be later. The figures are rather stiff, the pilasters have brackets, not found so developed elsewhere and the foliage, *kīrttimukhas*, lotuses and the pot-and-foliage stylised as compared with the same motifs on the Gupta temple and panels. They may belong to the later Gupta temple immediately to north, of which only the moulded courses of the plinth have survived.

L. G. 3 : (ht. $1' 6\frac{1}{2}''$). Vishṇu wearing high *kirīṭamukuṭa* seated on four-legged chair in a *chaitya*-window. Half of this medallion is broken. The upper left hand holds the *śaṅkha* and the lower is placed on the thigh, while the *chakra* is shown aslant against the medallion. Artistic but later.

Kṛishṇa hurling discus ($12'' \times 9''$). It shows the bust of a male figure, wearing crown, in the act of hurling a discus or *chakra* held in his right hand, while the fluted shield in his left hand is raised aloft over his head to allow of full force being exerted. This possibly represents the scene of Śrī Kṛishṇa hurling his *chakra* against his enemy Śiśupāla[1].

Kṛishṇa subduing fire. Fragment showing a male figure wearing only a *langoṭī* seated with legs doubled up and arms crossed and placed on the chest in front of fire which is shown with rising flames. Behind him the head of a cow suggests that the figure might be of a cow-herd companion of Kṛishṇa. The scene may have represented Kṛishṇa subduing the forest fire.[2]

Woman offering a child to her male companion ($1' 1'' \times 1' 4\frac{1}{2}''$). Fragment broken across the top and left hand side. It shows a male and a female figure standing, the latter with a child in her arms whom she is offering to her male companion who, however, stands indifferent.

Hanūmān's first meeting with Rāma (ht. $7''$). Fragment showing the bust of a monkey figure looking to right, probably Hanūmān holding up his right hand with palm outwards and the left across the waist. The rest of the panel is missing. The fragment may, however, represent Hanūmān at the time of his first meeting with Rāma.[3].

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[1] *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* : *Skandha* X, *Adhyāya* 74, verse 43.

[2] *Ibid*, *Skandha* X, *Adhyāya* 17.

[3] Cf. Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

Combat of Vāli or Bāli and Sugrīva, Hanūmān standing behind[1] (1′ 3″×1′). The above scene leads on to the actual combat that took place between the two brothers, Bāli and Sugrīva depicted on this fragment. Sugrīva seems to have thrown on the ground his opponent of whom only the left arm and foot have survived. Hanūmān is standing behind with a club.

Astonishment of Sugrīva at the feats of Rāma ($8\frac{1}{2}$″×11″). The fragment shows on the right a monkey figure, probably Sugrīva, with club in his right hand, while his left is pointing with the index finger to his cheek in amazement. In front of him was another figure whose right hand is raised aslant and stretches over the head of Sugrīva. This may possibly represent the astonishment of Sugrīva at Rāma's feat in picking the skeleton of Dundubhi and piercing seven *tāla* trees with an arrow at one stroke.[2]

Monkeys carrying stones for bridge-construction (height 1′ 2″× $5\frac{1}{2}$″). Shows busts of three monkeys in a row carrying overhead with both hands boulders for making a bridge[3] across the sea at Setubandha Rāmeśvaram.

Krishṇa killing the bull demon (height 7″). It is a small fragment showing the head of a bull being seized by the horns with both hands by a figure in the act of twisting them round (Pl. XXI, *b*). The scene may be connected with Kṛishṇa killing Dhenukāsura.[4]

Pillars and other architectural members

Altogether five pillars, *i.e.*, two large and three small ones, all tapering towards the top, have been found at and around the temple. Of these, two large and one small are square in section, the remaining two being circular and fluted (Pl. XII). With the exception of a small pillar they were all found by Cunningham on the temple plinth and have been removed to the sculpture godown where the large ones are erected on either side of the godown porch.

Pillar No. 1. The pillar to left of the porch is 9′ 1″ high, and 1′ $8\frac{1}{2}$″ square at the base diminishing to 1′ $4\frac{3}{4}$″ square at the top (Pl. XIII, *a*). At its base is a 6″ band relieved on each side with two couchant lions facing opposite directions; the faces on the adjoining sides meet at the corners so as to make the full profile of the animal head. Between them are the full face and fore paws of another lion. Again, at the centre of the pillar there is a broad, raised band ($7\frac{1}{2}$″ high) with a flowered creeper going round (Pl. XIV, *a-c*). The scheme of this band consists of a foliate flower in the centre of each face, the calyx of which is round or diamond-shaped on opposite sides, the remaining spaces on each side being filled by half flowers terminating at the corners. Immediately above this band is a rosette border at the corners of which rises a bold creeper spreading inwards on two adjoining facets, the concavity made by the octagonal fluting at this point being made to emphasize the depth

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1 This stone is of buff and not red colour and the workmanship of the relief is of a later date. This obviously belonged to another temple but has been included for the continuity of the narrative.

2 *Rāmāyaṇa, Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa*, Sargas 11-12.

3 Cf. Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 532.

4 Cf. *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, Canto 14.

and luxurious nature of the creepers, while the space on each of the remaining facets is relieved by a full blown lotus. This rosette-and-creeper border is but the framing on each side of a sunk, three quarter circular medallion containing a highly artistic relief, the subject in each case being a stalwart male figure, with hair luxuriously dressed, seated in the centre on a raised seat with a female figure on either side in an amorous attitude. The chairs are arranged in a row. The details are as follows:—

East face. The male, somewhat inebriated, holds a wine cup in his right hand, while the woman on that side is reclining on her left hand which is placed on the doubled right leg of the male and holds a flower in the other hand. The woman on the left is resting her right hand on the left shoulder of the male whose left hand is placed on the thigh and the leg on the ground (Pl. XIV, *a*).

South face. The male figure, with drooping eyes, holds a wine flask in his right hand and the left is placed on the thigh of the leg resting on the ground. His right leg, doubled and raised, is held by a twisted scarf carried round his waist so as to rest on the left thigh of the female companion who is offering a cup with her right hand kept touching the man's knee and has placed her left hand on his shoulder. The woman to left, seated on her feet with doubled legs, is also half drowsy but on a lower seat, and has placed her right hand on the near arm of the male. All the figures are intoxicated (Pl. XIV, *b*).

West face. In this the male holds a flower in his right hand and the woman to left has placed her right hand on the doubled leg of the male alongside the man's hand and holds a flower in her other hand. The woman to right is leaning full forward, her left arm being in embrace from behind and right over the upper arm of the male. All figures are completely immersed in pleasure (Pl. XIV, *c*).

North face. This is somewhat blurred. The male in the centre holds up his right hand as if to cry halt to the merriment. The woman to his right has detached her hand from the male figure but that to left is still reclining her right hand on the man's doubled and raised leg. This scene seems to mark a gradual return to normality.

Over the short octagonal portion comes a fluted squat vase with a garland base showing upturned foliage at the corners (Pl. XIII, *a*). Above this are two small octagonal bands with palm leaves and flowered wreaths crowned finally by a square member with elaborate creeper patterns.

Between the central raised band and that above the lion frieze at the base, the plain surface is vertically inscribed with a line of ornate shell characters on the south face alongside which is a Gupta inscription in two lines (see above , p. 3), also engraved vertically (Pl. XIII, *c*) which reads :—

(*a*) In shell characters: *Śrī Govinda.*

(*b*) In Gupta script:

L.1. *Keśāvapura-svāmi-pādīya-bhāgavata-*

L.2. *Govindasy-edaṁ nāma*,[1]

Pillar No. 2. To right of the porch. This is 9′ 3½″ high, 1′ 9″ sq. at the base tapering to 1′ 4¾″ at the top and in general similar to the pillar at the left (Pl. XIII, *b*). Here at the base is a squat vase similar to the one below its square top-member both showing lotus buds and flowers issuing from them and luxuriant turnovers at the corners. The broad band at the centre consists on each side of a highly foliate flower with round calyx and a half-flower from the adjoining facets integrating at the corners. This garland is arranged in the form of a continuous festoon with semi-circular loops strung together at the calyx. Above this come the three-quarter, circular sunk medallions framed like those on the other pillar. In these the scenes are varied (Pl. XIV, *d-f*).

East face. It shows a *suparṇa* with large foliate wings standing on either side of *Kalpavṛiksha* (Pl. XIV, *d*). It is interesting to compare this with the same motif that frequently occurs on the temple at Prambanan and other Javanese monuments of the 8th-9th centuries A. D.

South face. In this a rocky grove is represented by a flowered tree in the background wherein are seated on rocks a male in the centre and a squatting female to his left. At the right stands a *gaṇa* (Pl. XIV, *e*). To judge from the half-closed eyes of the female the couple appears to be in a joyful mood. The man's face and hands are broken.

West face. This shows two bearded anchorites with matted hair facing each other and seated on stools with criss-cross bands in a grove under the shade of a tree with outspread branches (Pl. XIV, *f*). In front is a long-necked water flask suspended from a tripod. The elderly and emaciated figure to right may be Vālmīkí in his *āśrama* narrating stories to Bhāradvāja,[2] but the suggestion is merely tentative.

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[1] Messrs Y. R. Gupte and Daya Ram Sahhi read the inscription as follows (*A. P. R., H. & B. Mons., N. C.*, for the year ending 31st March, 1915, p. 5 and 31st March, 1918, p. 12 respectively):

L. 1 *Keśavapura-svāmi-pādāya-bhāgavata-*

L. 2 *Govindasya dānam.*

According to Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra, Government Epigraphist for India, the correct reading is :

L. 1 [*Srīmataḥ Ke*] *śa*[*ra*]*pura-svāmipādīya-bhāgavata.*

L. 2 *Govindasyedaṁ nāma.*

'This is the name of the illustrious Bhāgavata Govinda, votary of the Lord of Keśarapura.'

According to him, *idaṁ nāma*' 'this name, refers to the scroll-work (representing *saṅkha lipi* or shell characters) appearing immediately over the two lines of the Gupta inscription, *n* and *d* being written separately and not as a conjunct letter.

[2] *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, Bālakāṇḍa*, Sarga 2, verse 22.

North face. This is very much blurred. It, however, shows a youthful male on a raised seat in the centre with a female standing to his right and perhaps another to left, but this is altogether gone.

At the top, above the fluted vase, is a rectangular member, 1′ 2″ in height, showing on the east face a creeper with a half blown flower in the centre; a rosette with foliage artistically turned on either side on the south; a double knot made of the diagonally disposed flowered stalks in the centre, the space round which is filled with curved foliage on the west, but the north face is completely blurred.

Pillar No. 3. This is the upper half of a square pillar similar to No. 1 in shape and ornamentation but its lower part is missing (Pl. XII, *d*). Its present height from top to its break at the plain part of the shaft is 5′ 6″ and the top 1′ $1\frac{1}{2}$″ square. It is unfinished, the three quarter circular medallions above the broad band of foliated flowers being as yet shown only in outline, but the top portion with vase-and-foliage, flower, garland and leafy patterns is properly finished.

Pillar No. 4. This is square at the base and top where there is a squat fluted vase with upturned foliage at the corners, the rest of it with three circular bands being sixteen-sided with concave fluting (Pl. XII, *c*). This is much smaller than pillars Nos. 1-3 described above. It is 6′ 9″ high and 1′ 4″ square at the base and tapers to 1′ $1\frac{1}{2}$″ square at the top. Immediately above the vase at the bottom stands, in easy posture, a woman at each corner with one foot on the ground and the other crossed from behind touching the ground with the toe, while the heel of the other foot is in contact with the heavy scarf held within the doubled right arm. One hand holds a flower, while the other rests on the hip (*kaṭihasta*). The band above these figures (two of which are broken) is ornamented with a series of eight *kīrttimukhas* and the next one above with an equal number of foliated flowers. The base of the upper vase shows a thick garland made of interlinked flowers. Finally, the faces of the square abacus from right to left show a *kīrttimukha*; four diamond-shaped half-flowers in the arms of a diagonal cross; the circular calyx of a flower with bifoliate creeper symmetrically drawn on either side, and a full-blown sun-flower.

Pillar No. 5. In all respects this is similar to No. 4. Its upper portion from the flowered base of the vase upwards is missing. Height 5′ $5\frac{1}{4}$″, base 1′ 4″ square. In each female figure at the corners of this pillar the right or left leg is shown to cross one behind the other.

CHAPTER IV

ART

The most artistic and profusely ornamented, if also the most dignified, figures are carved on the door-way and the three large panels of Gajendra-moksha, Nara-Nārāyaṇa and Ananta-śāyī Vishṇu occurring on the west, north, east and south sides respectively of the main temple. Their expression and poses are suited to the various acts and purposes, which each figure was intended to portray. A prominent but common feature is their *tribhaṅga* pose which is expressed in various attitudes, in a very natural and realistic manner without the slightest affectation. In the case of women, the folds of skin on the abdomen, referred to by classical Sanskrit writers like Kālidāsa as *trivalī-taraṅga*, and a prominent fold below the chest of the pot-bellied dwarfs, are depicted with great effect. Most of the figures exhibit in them grace, dignity and expression, which only a feeling artist, master of his own craft imbued with a deep understanding of human feelings and emotions, was capable of producing. No mere religious convention, howsoever faithfully it might be followed in accordance with the canons of *Śilpa Sāstras*, could have produced a real wealth of art if it was not backed by adequate understanding of human psychology in the absence of which it was liable to degeneration, a feature which becomes progressively more and more apparent in the decadence which set in soon after the zenith of art attained during the Gupta period had been passed. Whether we look to the figures of the *pratihāras* and *pratihārīs*, the garland-bearing ladies, the goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā, the *dampatī* pairs, the atlases or dwarfs upholding pots with foliage from which emerges the broad *dhatūrā* band or the beautifully entwined creepers with *amorini* shown in the bends, the master hand of the artist is all too apparent. The attitude of deep reverence and respect portrayed in the *pratihāras*, in the right hand *pratihārī* taking out a garland of flowers with her right hand from a fluted cup held in the other, of the left-hand *pratihārī* who has raised her right hand with which she is touching the chin in deep adoration and the rapt attention of the ladies holding garlands in their right hands, cannot but fail to impress how clearly the artist has succeeded in translating their innermost feelings which it was his purpose to depict in respect of the deity enshrined in the sanctum, nor can the divine figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā fail to impress by their dignity and inspire respect in the worshipper.

For art, the panels of Gajendra-moksha and Ananta-śāyī Vishṇu (Pl. X) may be taken together. In the former, so far as the descent from heaven of Vishṇu for the emancipation of the Gaja is concerned, there is rapidity of action which has at once been transformed by the artist into his beatific aspect on the Nāga and Nāgī figures imploring forgiveness with folded hands and the elephant offering at the feet of the lord a bunch of lotus flowers with his upheld tusk as a token of homage and gratitude for his deliverance. The Ananta-śāyī Vishṇu, on the other hand, depicts his peaceful sleep to which he is lulled by Lakshmī shampooing the feet, while the other gods who have come to pay their homage, *viz.*, Kārttikeya, Indra, Hara-Gaurī, etc., show not only respect but rapid action both of themselves and their *vāhanas* racing through the sky. The slab below, depicting four personified weapons and two demons shows

action in the first three figures from left, complacence in the fourth and fifth who, along with their leader, are confident of superior strength, while the lady (Kaumodakī at the extreme right is also disdainfully complacent.

The penance of Nara-Nārāyaṇa (Pl. XI) who are shown immersed in deep meditation with their minds turned to other-worldliness and the attainment of salvation is a masterpiece of art in simplicity, serenity and calmness. It may be pointed out in general that the principal figures in each of the three panels, referred to above, and on the doorway, for sheer dignity and grace as well as for the elaboration of the theme, which it was the purpose of the artist to depict, easily dominate over the subordinate or subsidiary figures which have never been allowed to rise equal to the former, although, as I have already pointed out, the artist has imparted to them also a touch of realism, vivacity and feeling which easily show their superiority over similar or accessory figures in later art.

Perhaps, it should be pointed out that the rigidly canonical figures of Vishṇu seated on Ananta over the *lalāṭabimba* of the doorway, in the upper ground above the heads of Nara-Nārāyaṇa and of the Ananta-śāyī Vishṇu, as well as those of Gaja-Lakshmī and Gaṇeśa on the right hand pilasters of the above panels, have so much bound the artist by religious conventions that he did not find himself unfettered to give a free vent to his hands and feelings as in dealing with the mass of sculpture referred to above. To that extent, therefore, art is subordinated to the strict formation of the canonical statuary.

The spacious terrace, in the centre of which rose the three storeyed pyramidal sanctum, was enclosed by a 10 ft. high plinth crowned by a coping. Its outline was relieved by projecting corner shrines along the basement in the centre of which was on each side a grand flight of steps, while the spaces between them and the corner shrines were relieved by small projections. The effect of all this, as may be judged from the partial restoration that has been attempted of the plinth, must have been very imposing(Pl. V). To break the drab monotony of the deeply moulded courses, the veneering of the plinth above the fourth and seventh courses from the bottom was formed into a series of panels by means of pilasters. Those rising above the fourth course are much larger than those which rose above the sixth course, the height of the former being 2′ 6½″ and of the latter 1′ 5″. Judging from the extent of the perimeter of the plinth the number of panels which were originally built into it must have been very large. Of these, however, a very small number has now survived. This is the most regrettable part. Even so, some of the panels, depicting the Rāma and Kṛishṇa cults, would help to build up that religious atmosphere which must have prevailed and inspired the thoughts of the temple-goers as they entered its precincts. Apart from the portrayal of religious narratives some of these panels deserve to be noticed as real works of art. For depicting the surpassing feeling of joy on the faces of Rāma, Lakshmaṇa and the Rishi Viśvāmitra, and the feeling of deep gratitude on the part of Ahalyā on her deliverance from the curse of her husband by Śrí Rāma (Pl. XV, *a*); the sombre and ghastly feelings on the faces of Śrī Rāma and Sitā, and the feeling of anger and determination on the face of Lakshmaṇa in proceeding with

the mutilation of the nose and the ears of Śūrpaṇakhā (Pl. XVII, *a*) ; the disdainful vanity and unholy resolution on the part of Rāvaṇa in the Aśoka-vāṭikā, which hastened his ultimate doom (Pl. XVII, *d*) ; the garlanding of Sugrīva by Lakshmaṇa in the presence of Rāma to help in his ready identification in the combat of two brothers who closely resembled each other, and the feeling of satisfaction on the face of Sugrīva that he can now win over his brother Vāli or Bāli (Pl. XVII, *b*) ; the anxious and terror-stricken urge on the part of Rumā and Aṅgada as well as Hanūmān's counsel to the same effect to make Sugrīva rise to action from his reckless abandon to which he had given himself under the intoxication of wine against the disastrous anger of Lakshmaṇa (Pl. XVII, *c*) ; the anxiety and post-haste speed seen on the figure of Hanūmān carrying the hill bearing the *mrita-sanjīvañī* herb in order to revive Lakshmaṇa back to life from the swoon into which he had fallen from the blow struck at him by Meghanāda (Pl. XVII, *e*)—could each, for the purpose of their various themes, be hardly excelled.

No less interesting and engaging are the scenes of Devakī regretfully making over her new-born babe Kṛishṇa to her husband Vasudeva for his immediate transfer unnoticed to Gokula in order to save him from the homicidal wrath of Kaṁsa (Pl. XVIII, *a*); the feeling of deep satisfaction on the part of Nanda and Yaśodā in fondling the divine children Kṛishṇa and Balarāma in their rural surroundings depicted by cows in the background (Pl. XIX, *a*) ; and the stunned bewilderment of Yaśodā at the divine child Kṛishṇa hurling aloft by his left leg the cart filled with jars of butter, curds, etc. (Pl. XVIII, *b*). The scenes, referred to above, are not only the earliest lithic representations of some of the scenes connected with the cults of Rāma and Kṛishṇa, but as works of art they rank as notable achievements which it would be difficult to surpass.

Dresses

It would be convenient to make a brief reference at this point to the principal dresses worn by male and female figures. Taking the female figures first, it may be stated that goddesses Lakshmī, Pārvatī, Gaṅgā and Yamunā; royal ladies such as Sītā, Śūrpaṇakhā and Devakī, as well as ladies of high rank or nobility such as those depicted on Pillars 1 and 2 ; as well as some of the dancing figures on panels P. 9 and P.10, wear *muktāvaikakshakas*, of which the two strands are fastened together by means of a clasp in the centre or otherwise between the region of breasts. This is clearly shown in the figures of Gaṅgā and Devakī. All goddesses, ladies of high rank and even others, wear a *dopaṭṭā* or *uttarīya* which usually hangs down from over the shoulders and under the arms down to the feet, though some of the dancing figures on panels P. 9 and P. 10 are without them. The waving folds of the *dopaṭṭā* are artistically brought out in a variety of ways. The female figures wear full *dhotīs* the ends of which hang down in graceful, stylised, wavy curves alongside the left leg. Full *dhotīs*, though usual with females, are not the rule without exception. Thus, among the more prominent figures, only loin cloth down to the knees (*ardhoruka*) is worn by the *pratihārī* and the garland-bearing lady on the right jamb of the temple door, as well as by females in two of the *dampati* couples on this side and in certain other cases also. In many cases the *dhotī* or loin cloth, as the case may be, is striped and

even chevroned—a feature so often met with in Gupta sculpture and painting, fine examples of which may be seen in the dance and elephant riding scenes at Bāgh caves[1] and some scenes at Ajantā also. This, however, is the dress that was popular with townswomen. Against this, the rural or rustic dress was more suited to the life of the countryside. Thus, even Yaśodā, with typical rural dress, wears a long tunic (*kurtā*) open from top to bottom along the left side and fastened near the breast by means of a cord. Her under-garment is a long flowing skirt (*āprapadīna*, *lahangā*) of which the heaviness is indicated by the vertical folds coming close together. Overhead she wears an *orhnī* in the fashion of a typical Panjabi *jhummā*, the left end of which is tied into a knot. This headgear leaves the arms free for work which would not be the case with a *dopaṭṭā* hanging down from over the shoulders. Even Sītā in the *vana-gamana* panel (R. 2) wears *jhummā*, though this is not her head-dress invariably in the exile.

Dress worn by dancing women had to be of a different kind suited to their vocation. Hence, the central dancing figures shown in panels P. 9 and P. 10 wear a long, full-sleeved upper garment descending to below the knees and tied round the waist by a sash, the ends of which are hanging down in front. The under-garment is a close fitted *pyjama* which was a necessity in the brisk whirling movement of the dance. The attendant figures, two on each side of these dancers engaged in playing on the drum, percussion with the cymbals and cross beating sticks to the tune of the dance, however, wear *dhotīs* with or without a scarf round their waist such as is usually worn by the male figures above their loin cloth.

Male figures of gods or men of high rank usually have the upper part of their body bare of garments, though Rāma and Lakshmaṇa as well as the first two warriors in the lower ground of the Ananta-śāyī panel all wear *chhannavīra*. All the male figures—gods, noble men and others—however, wear a loin-cloth, which in the case of the more important figures such as the *pratihāra* on the right jamb of the temple door, the figures of Vasudeva and Nanda (M. 1 and M. 2) are more or less finely creased. In all cases, round the upper edge of the loin cloth a plain cord or belt, sometimes in the form of a bifoliate twig usually buckled in the centre, is wound round once or twice and tied or knotted in a variety of ways (Pl. XXX, 1-8 and 10) in order to secure the *dhotī*. The buckle is square, rectangular, circular, rosette-shaped or round. Again, a thick, twisted scarf, usually worn aslant from around the upper part of the right leg to over the left hip with a thick knot at this point, serves as a hand-rest for easy reclining since the figures are shown in *tribhaṅga* pose. Exceptionally, however, the knot of the scarf, more as a matter of necessity than fashion, is also tied on the right-hand side as in the case of the second *dampatī* couple in the band above the head of the *pratihāra* on the left jamb of the doorway (Pl. VIII, *a*). There is yet another mode of wearing the scarf as in the case of Indra on his elephant who is shown in the sky above the figure of Vishṇu in the Ananta-śāyī panel. The scarf is wound round from over the left shoulder in the fashion of *yajñopavīta* (*vastrayajñopavīta*), the front end of which falls on the left ear of Airāvata (Pl. X, *b*).

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[1] Marshall and others, *Bāgh Caves*, India Society (London, 1927), Pls. D, E and I.

Deer skin (*mṛigacharma*) is worn from over the left shoulder by the figures of Nara and Nārāyaṇa (Pl. XI and XXVII, 21), by Brahmā seated on *kamalāsana* in the Ananta-śāyī panel (Pl. X, *b*), as well as by Svayamprabhā (Pl. XXIII, *d*), but both Brahmā in the upper ground as well as the anchorites standing behind Nara and Nārāyaṇa and the two ascetics seated on stools inside the medallion on the west face of pillar No. 2 (Pls. X, *b*, XI and XIV, *f*) wear cross-belts which are finely hatched in four out of the five cases. In the right-hand side flying male figure in the upper ground of the Nara-Nārāyaṇa panel, a piece of cloth worn on the back and tied in front is shown (Pl. XI, *a*). This is rather unusual.

The male dwarf pairs, who act as atlases in supporting the entablature, but for the more or less thick twisted scarf or *udarabandha* worn by a number of them are entirely nude. However, in more seemly places, such as representations of the temple façades on the right and left jambs of the doorway, the dancing dwarfs are shown to wear a loin cloth and a long flowing *dopaṭṭā* on the shoulders falling down to the feet. Loin-cloth is also shown on the attendant dwarf standing with a crooked staff held in his hand to the left of Vishṇu on the *lalāṭabimba* of the temple door (Pl. IX, *a*).

The child Kṛishṇa in the act of hurling the cart full of butter pots (Pl. XVIII, *b* and XXX, 16) is shown entirely nude but wears a *taḍāgī* (girdle), from which hangs a small sounding bell. It is interesting to recall that on the Gupta figure of Gaṇeśa from Bhūmarā[1] there is a series of sounding bells (*ghuṅguru*) threaded in the *yajñopavīta* worn by him. A good part of the dress remained unstitched, but the bodices, *kurtā*, the long flowing, full sleeved tunic worn by dancing females, the *pyjama* and *lahangā* were apparently stitched, but it is not quite clear whether the crossbelts were stitched or not.

Head and hair-dresses (Pl. XXVII)

Head-dress. Head-dresses in the case of male figures may be divided into those worn by (a) god Vishṇu, (b) tiaras by royal figures and noble men, and (c) by the attendant figures. The *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* of Vishṇu is tall and imposing with an upward taper. Along its upper end is either a rolled or twisted rim (as in the Vishṇu figures in the Ananta-śāyī panel (Pl. X, *b*) and V. 1 and V. 2, (Pls. XXII, *a* and *b* and XXVII, 1, 2 and 4) or a flat rim relieved by a series of flowers (Pl. XXVII, 3). In the cases of Nos. V. 2 and V. 1 a series of pearl-festoons or beaded garlands hang over the front half of the head, but in all cases round its lower edge runs a broad band inset with pearls from which rise three clasps, the more prominent one in the centre flanked by a smaller one on either side (Pl. XXVII, 1-2). The wall of the *mukuṭa* is variously adorned either with cross-hatched and floral designs or with vertical bands into panels (Pl. XXVII, 3), the front one of which in the case of Gajendra-moksha Vishṇu shows fine cross-hatching (Pl. XXVII, 2 and 4), while the upper border is beaded (Pl. XXVII, 4). In V. 3, however, there is a cross-shaped bifoliate hand which runs across

[1] R. D. Banerji, *The Siva Temple at Bhūmarā*, Pl. XV, *a* and *b*.

the centre of the wall of the *mukuṭa* marked by a flower boss over every point of intersection. The clasps, referred to above, are of various floral designs emanating from a central nucleus which is rectangular with straight or concave sides, circular or oblate.

Coming now to the *pratihāras* (Pl. IX, *b* and *c*), the first and second warriors in the Ananta-śāyī-panel (Pl. X, *b*), and to the Nāga figure in the Gajendra-moksha panel (Pl. X,*a*), it is seen that the tiaras in all cases consist of a broad band immediately above the forehead from which rise three foliated clasps, the taller one above the forehead and less prominent ones on the sides (Pl. XXVII, 12), but in the case of the third warrior, the prominent clasps come on the sides and the smaller one over the forehead as he wears a peculiar tiara (Pl. XXVII, 11). The band of these tiaras with raised rims is decorated with quatrefoil rosettes or by a single row of beads as in the Gajendra-moksha panel. The clasps are circular, oblate or semi-oval. In the case of the Nāga, there is only one prominent clasp seen above the forehead, while the fillet, which is ornamented in the form of a bifoliate twig, has a quatrefoil rosette on either side (Pl. X, *a* and XXVII, 14). A similar fillet is also seen on the head of Sugrīva in panel R. 7 (Pl. XVII, *b*). The place of this tiara in the case of the third and fifth warriors in the Ananta-śāyī panel is taken by a strong, thick cord which threads in front above the forehead a full-blown flower ornament in the case of the former and by a vertically worn biconical foliated ornament with raised rims at the points where the cord passes through the tubular hole in the latter (Pl. X, *b* and XXVII, 13 and 15). The last ornament is unique and presumably represented more than a half-disc in plan.

Two interesting caps are seen on the flying figures, one round with raised lower rim worn on the head of the left-hand male figure carrying the crown above the head of Vishṇu in the Gajendra-moksha panel (Pl. XXVII, 17), and the second a tight-fitting conical cap with a long tassel falling in several tiers from the apex towards the left on the head of the right side garland-bearing male figure flying in the sky in the Nara-Nārāyaṇa panel (Pl. XI, *a* and XXVII, 18). It may be interesting to compare this with a similar headgear worn by the much later Vijayanagara monarchs like Kṛishṇadevarāya.

Hair-dresses. Much attention seems to have been devoted to toilet both by male and female figures and there is ample evidence of a conspicuous use of flowers and flower garlands as well as of netting for the hair. Taking the male figures first, the *pratihāra* on the right jamb of the temple door is shown with tresses rising vertically up and falling down artistically on the left shoulder in no less than nine luxurious tiers of curled hair (Pl. XXVII, 12). Between the forehead and first tier runs a twisted garland round the head, while lower down the plait of hair, looped up into a bun and decorated with a series of rosettes on the sides and a full blown flower at the apex, is bound with a net and falls on the right shoulder. The *pratihāra* figure on the left shows frizzled locks of hair falling in several tiers on both shoulders (Pl. IX, *a* and *c*), but as the head is broken, it is not possible to give further details.

Heavy wigs of hair are worn by ordinary men or attendants and by atlases, dwarfs and erotes. The wigs show several tiers of three quarter concentric circles, the space enclosed by the innermost tier being shown in the form of combed hair parted in the centre or ornamented with a flower and in quite a number of cases by a round protuberance which sometimes rises in the form of a cone of one or another kind. (Pl. XXVII, 19 and 23).

Frizzled hair is very common both in the male and female figures. The *āyudha-purusha* standing behind Ananta-śāyī Vishṇu has luxurious curls (Pls. X, *b*, and XXVII, 7-9,12, 14, 15, 17 and 20). This is also the case with the figure of Garuḍa carrying Vishṇu (Pl. X, *a*). Even more luxurious are the curls of hair falling in several tiers on the left shoulder in the busts of Vishṇu in V. 2 and V. 3 (Pl. XXII, *a* and *b*). Whereas Brahmā, Nara-Nārāyaṇa, anchorites, Rāma and Lakshmaṇa figures, etc., have matted hair worn in the form of a top knot tied round with a cord, the matted locks of Nārāyaṇa fall in bifurcated loops in front but in the case of Nara the loops occur only on the sides (Pls. XI and XXVII, 21, 25 and 26).

Turning to the female figures, it is noticed that the hair of the right-hand side *pratihārī* falls in front in three frizzled tiers the height of which is fully covered by the clasp above the forehead (Pl. XXVII, 9). Knit behind them is a twisted garland in the hair from which rises a broad bun with thick braids, but the lower plait of hair looped up below the bun and covered with flower netting falls on the right shoulder. The left *pratihārī* wears a broad netting prominently above the forehead on either side of which hang four loops of frizzled locks luxuriously above the cheeks (Pls. IX, *a* and *c* and XXVII, 8). Behind this is a twisted floral string with petals emerging from it in the rear and still further back the hair is arranged in the same way as of the right hand *pratihārī*. The hair of the garland-bearing figure so far as the back part of the head is concerned is very much the same as of the *pratihārīs*, but in front, the right hand figure shows four tresses on either side of the forehead, whereas the left one has her hair combed back and adorned with three series of double floral strings. The figure of Lakshmī, pressing the feet of her husband in the Ananta-śāyī panel, wears the front part of her hair in the same manner as that of the garland-bearing figure on the right jamb of the temple door (Pl. IX, *b*), but unique is the treatment of the hair of Kaumodakī at the extreme left of the *āyudhapurushas* in that panel in so far as her hair is combed back in large tresses and tied first by a string into a top-knot giving an *āmalaka*-like effect and then arranged at the back in *dhammilla* fashion (Pls. X, *b* and XXVII, 6).

Jewellery (Pls. XXVIII-XXX)

Jewellery is worn both by male and female figures, divine and human. For the males, it consists of ear-rings or ear-buttons, *chandrahāras* or necklets, small necklaces, armlets and bracelets, but strangely, rings only on the small fingers of hands are worn exclusively by the god Vishṇu. The females, too, wear similar jewellery, but to it may be added long necklaces, ornate girdles and anklets. A common ornament used both by male and female figures are the more or less ornate fillets worn on the head, but being associated with the hair they have already been described with headdresses and need not be repeated here.

I shall now take these ornaments from the ears down to the feet. The ear ornaments are of two kinds, *viz.*, rings and buttons. Few figures and those limited to god Vishṇu (Gajendra-moksha and Ananta-śāyī panels), Śiva, Indra, Kārttikeya (Ananta-śāyī panel) or to certain persons of high rank, *viz.*, warrior No. 4 (Ananta-śāyī panel) and the right male flying figure in the Gajendra-moksha panel wear ear-rings or *kuṇḍalas* on both ears. Women, whatever their position, wear buttons (*karṇaphūlas*) on both ears, though men frequently wear buttons on both ears but sometimes a ring on one ear and button on the other, as in warriors Nos. 1,2, 3 and 5 in the Ananta-śāyī panel. An exceptional instance of a female figure wearing *kuṇḍalas* on both ears is the flying figure showering flowers above the heads of Nara-Nārāyaṇa.

Ear-rings (*kuṇḍalas*) *or ear-buttons* (*karṇaphūlas*) (Pl. XXVIII)

Ear-rings are mainly of two kinds, *viz.*, simple rings with tapering ends to fit in the ear-lobes (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 7 and 10) or with a *trikaṇṭaka* or trifoliate design (Nos. 4, 6 and 9). From the former hang bud-shaped attachments or there is the addition of a beaded string round the circumference as in No. 2 to relieve their plainness. The trifoliate variety as in No. 4 is similar to No. 2 but its right and left hand foils are bulbous and not tapering, though it may be presumed that the ends which threaded the ear-lobe must have been quite thin. The triple-curve of the specimen in No. 6 is symmetrical and sustained, but in No. 9 the middle projection was cut flat in order to set it with a round bezel.

The ear-bottons, as already stated, were worn both by men and women. They consist of a small cylinder with raised rims within which the surface is either plain as in No. 5, or relieved by a cross-shaped quatrefoil rosette as in No. 8, an eight-petalled flower as in Nos. 12 and 13, a three-beaded vertical attachment as in the left ear of the garland-bearing female figure on the right jamb of the doorway (Pl. IX), which incidentally shows how the button was fixed across the lobe (No. 14), or a plain cylinder with a boss-headed attachment in the centre as in the left ear of the right hand *pratihārī* (No. 15), or even a disc with three concentric convex rings rising one above the other and crowned by a boss in the centre as in No. 16.

Necklets (Pl. XXVIII)

Chandrahāras, again, were worn both by male and female figures, their fineness and elaboration depending on the position of the person concerned, divine or human. Thus the necklaces worn by Vishṇu and Lakshmī, by the *pratihāras* and *pratihārīs*, the Nāgī in the Gajendra-moksha panel, by the warriors, etc. in the Ananta-śāyī panel and those worn by Devakī and Vasudeva (M. 1), or by other persons of high rank (*e.g.* Nos. 20-23) are far superior to those on the person of commoner folk. The most common patterns are either severely plain such as that worn by the Nāgī in the Gajendra-moksha panel (*ekāvalī*) (Pl. X, *a*) or with three beads down the centre as in the case of the upper necklet worn by Vishṇu in the same panel, but usually their simple form is beaded as in the upper necklet (*śīrshaka*[1]) worn by Vishṇu in Nos.

21 and 22. A little elaboration of this design may be seen in the necklet worn by the right hand figure in P. 2. A still more graceful variety of the beaded necklace is seen on the person of Yaśodā in M. 2. It consists of a triple string of beads in concentric formation with a rimmed cylindrical clasp in the centre (No. 28), but the similar ornament on the male figure in the right hand panel of L. G. 2 (Pl. XXVI, *a*) is not so effective. In this, the smaller bead cylinders forming the inner and outer rows are cut aslant but the central string consists of round beads with a large rounded cylinder in the centre (No. 30). Among the simple yet effective types of necklaces are the one worn by the female figure in P. 7 (No. 26), modelled after the fashion of a twisted garland of uniform thickness or with tapering ends as worn by the garland-bearing female figure on the right hand jamb of the doorway (Pl. IX) ; the second one in the form of a bifoliate twig as in Nos. 27, 32 and 39 and the third one of a twisted type (No. 31). It is interesting to recall in this connection that the last two graceful designs worn by male figures also occur on certain ear-buttons of faience found at Harappā dated to the third millennium B. C.[2] Two lunette-shaped necklaces with tapering ends, shown to much effect, are worn by the figures of Vishṇu in V. 4 as shown in Nos. 21 and 22. Of these, the former consists of three strings of round beads diminishing in size with the ends of the lunette and relieved in the centre by an oval ornament with pearl border (*phalakahāra*) consisting of the strings and the clasp, whereas in the latter an elaborate creeper emanates from the oval design (*patralatā*). There is another peculiar necklet consisting of tooth-shaped beads arranged symmetrically on either side of the central oval bead as in No. 33.

It remains now to notice necklets with pendants. One of these consisting of a beaded string with a lozenge-like pendant (No. 20) is worn by Vishṇu and the second one (No. 23), which is even more elaborate, by the Nāga figure in the Gajendra-moksha panel. The latter consists of round beads alternating with biconvex discs and a long oblate bead in the centre from which hangs vertically a biconvex pendant with raised rims set on either side with a large, round bezel. The body of this pendant is ornamented with flower petals. In section it may be presumed to have been more than a semi-biconvex disc conceived on the model of the one threaded by a cord on the head of the fifth warrior in the Ananta-śāyī panel (Pl. X, *b* and XXVII, 15). Necklaces are worn even by dwarfs who are otherwise naked. In quite a number of them hangs a round flower pendant in the centre (No. 39), some wear a trifoliate necklet with a large foil in the centre flanked on the sides by a smaller one (No. 17) or the finger nails of a lion's claw (No. 19).

Armlets (Pl. XXIX, 1—20)

Armlets may be divided into two varieties, *viz.*, the *anantavalaya* (modern *nantā*) so named after the shape of a coiled snake with its hood (Nos. 1—5) and cylinders (Nos. 6—20). The former is either severely plain as on the Gajendra-moksha Nāga (Nos. 1, 2 and 4), or scaled as in V. I (No. 5) or beaded as in the case of the *pratihāra*

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[1] The *śīrshaka* is defined as a necklace of pearls uniform in size with the central one larger than the others. Cf. *Arthaśāstra*, Chap. XI, p. 87 of translation by R. Shama Sastri, 1915.

[2] M. S. Vats, *Excavations at Harappā*, Vol. II, Pl. CXXXIX.

on the right door-jamb (No. 3). The cylindrical armlets are of several kinds, *viz.*, (*a*) plain as in the Gajendra-moksha Nāgī (No. 16) ; (*b*) with raised rims as on the Sītā figure in R. 6 ; (*c*) with a row of round beads between the rims as on the male figure in the central couple in P. 2 (No. 7) ; (*d*) with shallow cross-hatching as in Nos. 9 and 13, though in the latter, the place of the rim is taken by a beaded border or a chevron ornament as in the left hand *pratihārī* ; (*e*) with a row of small beads along the inner edge of the rims and convex oblique fluting over the central space as worn by Lakshmī in the Ananta-śāyī panel (No. 14). An adaptation of No. 13 in type (*d*) is furnished by Nos. 10 and 11, the former showing a series of upright flutes projecting beyond the raised horizontal bands constituting the borders, but in No. 11 the flutes within the horizontal bands, which are three instead of two, are circular and not vertical. In this, the circle formed at the centre is set with a large round bezel as shown on the arm of Devakī in M. I. Armlets with a prominent clasp rising in the centre are worn on the arms of Vishṇu in the Gajendra-moksha and Ananta-śāyī panels (Nos. 15 and 17). Both of them exhibit over the cylinder two parallel rows of pearls framed by narrow raised bands. From the body of this cylinder rises in both cases a floral ornament of which the effect is enhanced by graceful curves emanating as details from the nucleus. In the case of No. 17 the nucleus is a rectangle from which emerges a circular knot above and tasselated ends below. At the right end of this clasp is a heart-shaped ornament with rounded terminals.

Bracelets (Pl. XXIX, 21—28)

Bracelets were worn by all figures including dwarfs. They appear to be both solid and hollow and either uniformly round or tapering towards the ends. Again, in section, quite a large number of them appear to be semi-oval and in some cases biconvex. On the subsidiary figures they are severely plain, but where ornate they seem to have a groove set with a series of pearls. Elaboration of the bracelets is but occasional as typified by those worn by Vishṇu in the Gajendra-moksha and Ananta-śāyī panels and by the Nāga figures in the former panel. In the case of Ananta-śāyī Vishṇu the oblate ornament over the bracelet consists of a large bezel in the centre with a border of inset patterns (No. 26), but in the case of the Nāga figure this place is taken by a flower which is larger than that on the arm of Vishṇu.

Finger-rings

As I have already stated finger-rings on hands are worn only by Vishṇu in the Gajendra-moksha and Ananta-śāyī panels. The rings are quite simple, either set only with one bezel at the top or flanked on either side by a smaller one also (Pl. XXIX, 27).

Girdles (*mekhalā*) (Pl. XXX)

Girdles were worn by all classes of females ; those of a superior quality by goddesses and ladies of rank and comparatively inferior ones by the common folk. But whatever the quality, the fashion of ornamentation and suspension is the same. They seem to have been bound to a *kaṭisūtra* which, not being visible, may be presumed to have been rolled under the upper edge of the *dhotī* or loin-cloth. From this and the central clasp were suspended in the form of graceful festoons prominently falling

over the hips the ornamental part of the girdles in two, three or four strings, usually with a clasp in the centre from under or over which hangs a tassel as in Nos. 9, 11—13 and 17—19, but in No. 13 there is no clasp and the tassel hangs directly from the rolled rim of the *dhotī*. Beads in the festooned strings are either simple oblate as in No. 13 or of oval bosses as in No. 14. Where there are three strings, those with oblate beads are alternated by strings of small round beads and the number of their strings is two or one or *vice versa* according as they form the outer two or the inner string (Nos. 11 and 17-18). The oblate beads in Nos. 9 and 11 are separated by biconvex disc beads which act as spacers. In No. 19 the girdle has four strings, the first and third ones of biconical beads and the second and fourth ones of small round beads. So far as the clasps are concerned, with one exception, they are rosette-shaped (Nos. 11, 12, 17—19), but in the case of No. 9 the clasp consists of a double concentric circle from the centre of which emerges and hangs the tassel.

Anklets (*nūpuras*) (Pl. XXIX, 29—34)

Anklets are worn by all classes of women, but they do not appear on the feet of goddesses, *viz.*, Lakshmī, Pārvatī, Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The anklets are generally blurred and such ornamentation as existed on them can no longer be made out. Their form appears to have been simple and usually with a boss (*e.g.*, Nos. 31 and 32). In the case of Devakī (M. 1), and the garland-bearing figure on the right door-jamb the boss is shown sidewise. In section the anklets appear to be circular or oval.

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Strangely, the most usual ornament, common to male and female figures, *viz.*, the finger-ring, is found, as already stated, only on the small finger of the hands of Vishṇu to its entire exclusion on all figures of both sexes, nor is a finger-ring found on the feet of any woman. The absence of nose-rings or buttons, which have always been popular with women, is equally striking. Although there is much mutilation of the noses, in quite a large number of cases the noses are well preserved to have shown this ornament had it been worn.

31 D G. of Arch

CHAPTER V

CONSERVATION

The temple stands in the centre of a terraced plinth 55′ 6″ square pierced in the centre of each side by a flight of steps rising from a moonstone at the bottom. It consisted of four plain mouldings at the base on which stood a series of panels 2′ 7″ high and after laying thereon two moulded courses there rose a smaller series of reliefs which with the addition of yet another moulded course was finished with a heavy coping 1′ 7″ wide and 1′ 6″ high.

The plinth was ruined all over, but to give some idea of its original grandeur I restored it with certain obvious limitations, as no restoration was possible of the sculptured panels which are missing (Pl. VII). The two bottom courses of the plain moulding were mostly intact except at the south-west corner, where along the south face even the first course has had to be renewed for a length of 4′ 9″. Above this, the second course had to be put in for half the length and the third one for the whole of this side except for 2′ 8″ from the corner it makes with the steps. On the west face the second course has been put in all along between the projection of the plinth and the shrine at the south-west corner, whereas the third course, which existed over a sufficient length of the ruined plinth, had to be restored in much greater length in order to build up the corner shrines for at least three courses and to restore the flank walls of the flights of steps on all the four sides to the same height. Above this, the fourth moulded course, which was preserved only over small sections, has been restored either to secure in position the reliefs which stood above the second course over the north and south projections of the plinth on the east and west sides or to continue it on the flank walls of the west flight of steps leading to the sanctum. On this side seven monolithic steps and three only on each of the remaining sides have been restored after the original design. These steps are 9′ 6″ to 9′ 10″ long and 12″×11″ in section.

The bottom three courses, as restored, rise only to about 3′ or a third of the original height of the plinth. There would therefore have been a great deal of irregular fall of the terrace round the sanctum if the plinth were to be left like that. In order to raise the height of this terrace, without which the level at which the sanctum rises, cannot be appreciated, it has been found necessary to build up the core with undressed ashlar masonry for a height of 3′ above the moulded coursee. The stones used in the core are 4′ to 6′ long, 12″ high and 12″ to 15″ deep.

It may be added that the core of the *śikhara* on all the four sides had been made watertight and the hollow of the roofless second storey cleared of débris and properly drained many years ago (Pl. III). Since then, the larger architectural fragments have been properly arranged within the temple precincts and a number of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata* and other panels as well as stray sculptures or fragments of the Gupta and post-Gupta temples have been arranged in a sculpture godown specially constructed for the purpose immediately to the east of the temple. To enhance the educative value of this collection labels have also been provided to the more important panels and sculptures.

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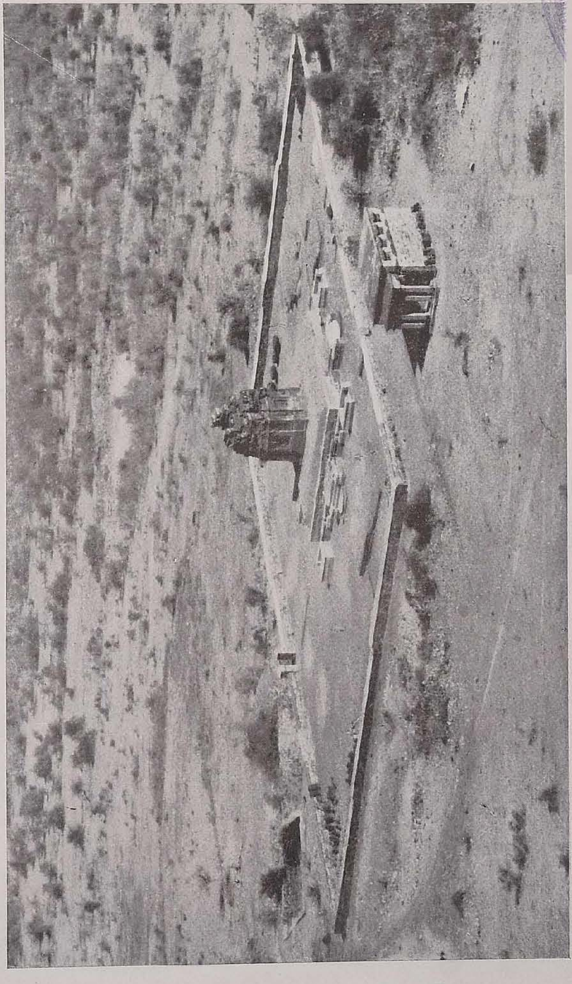
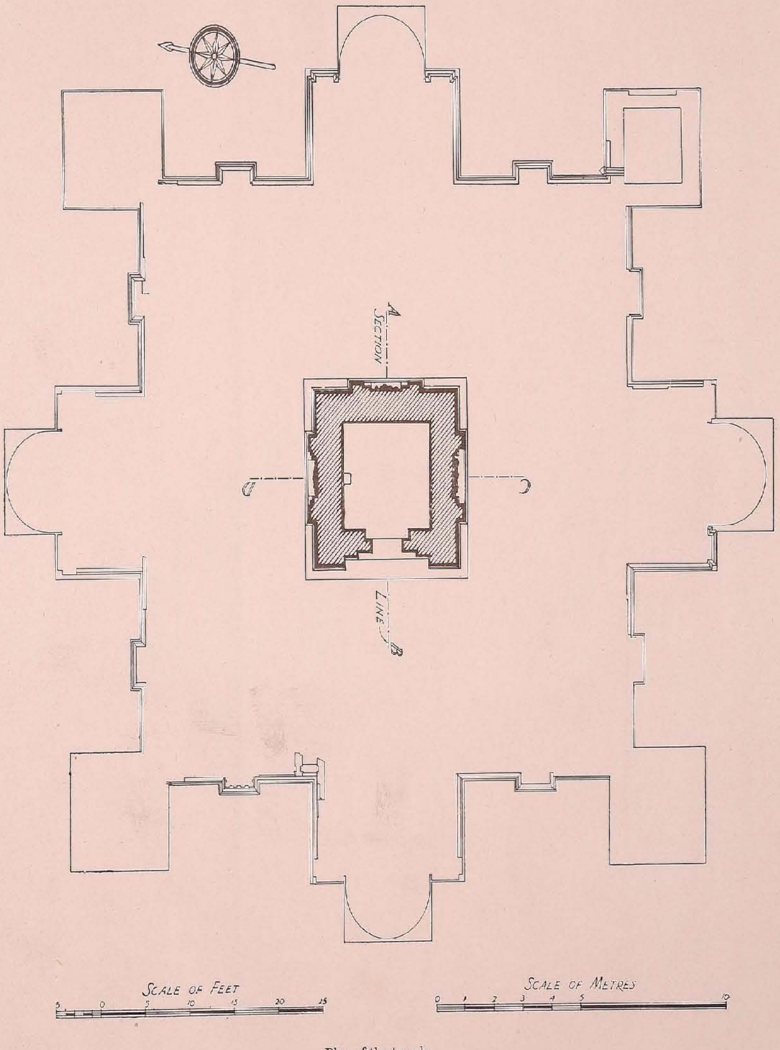
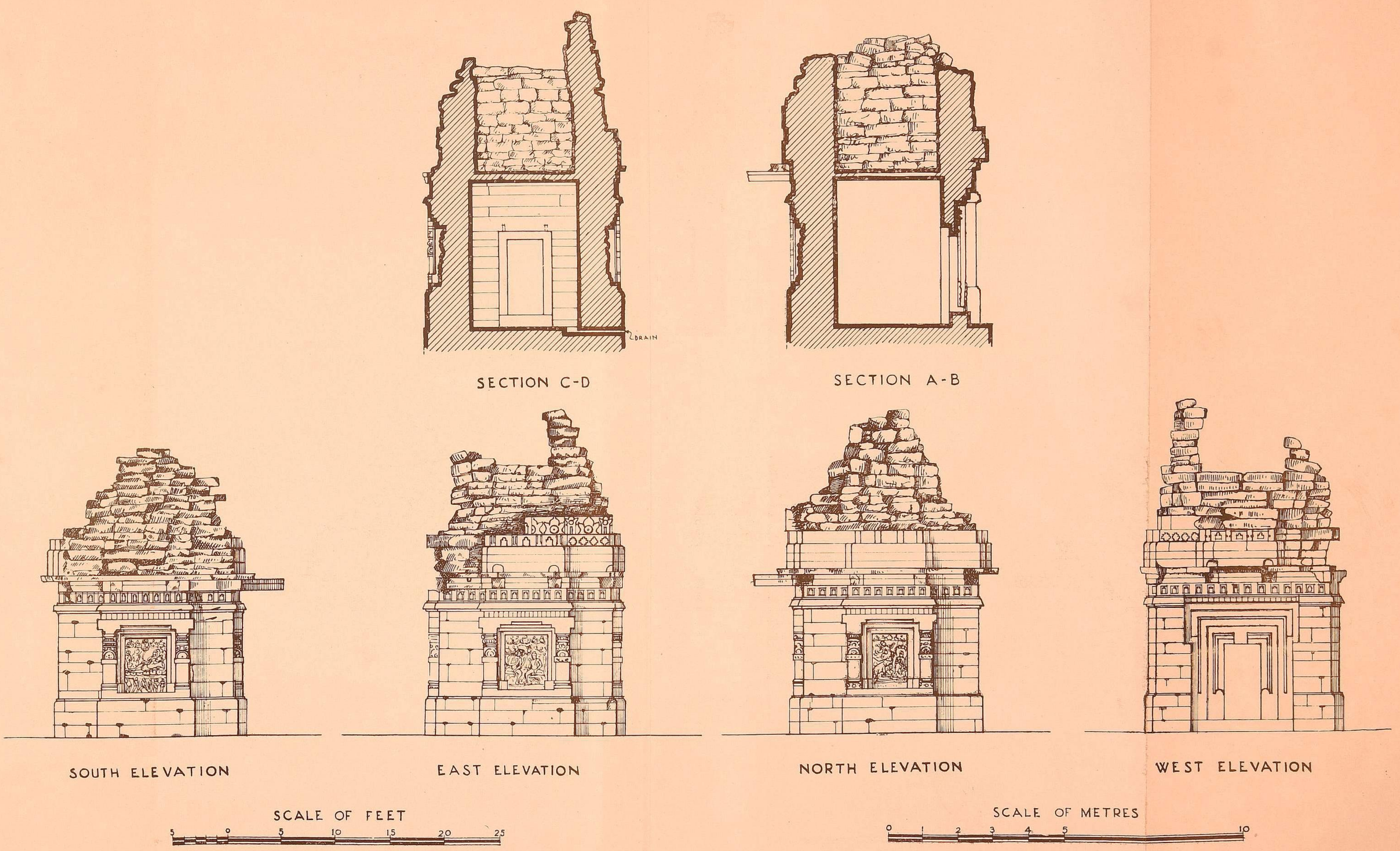


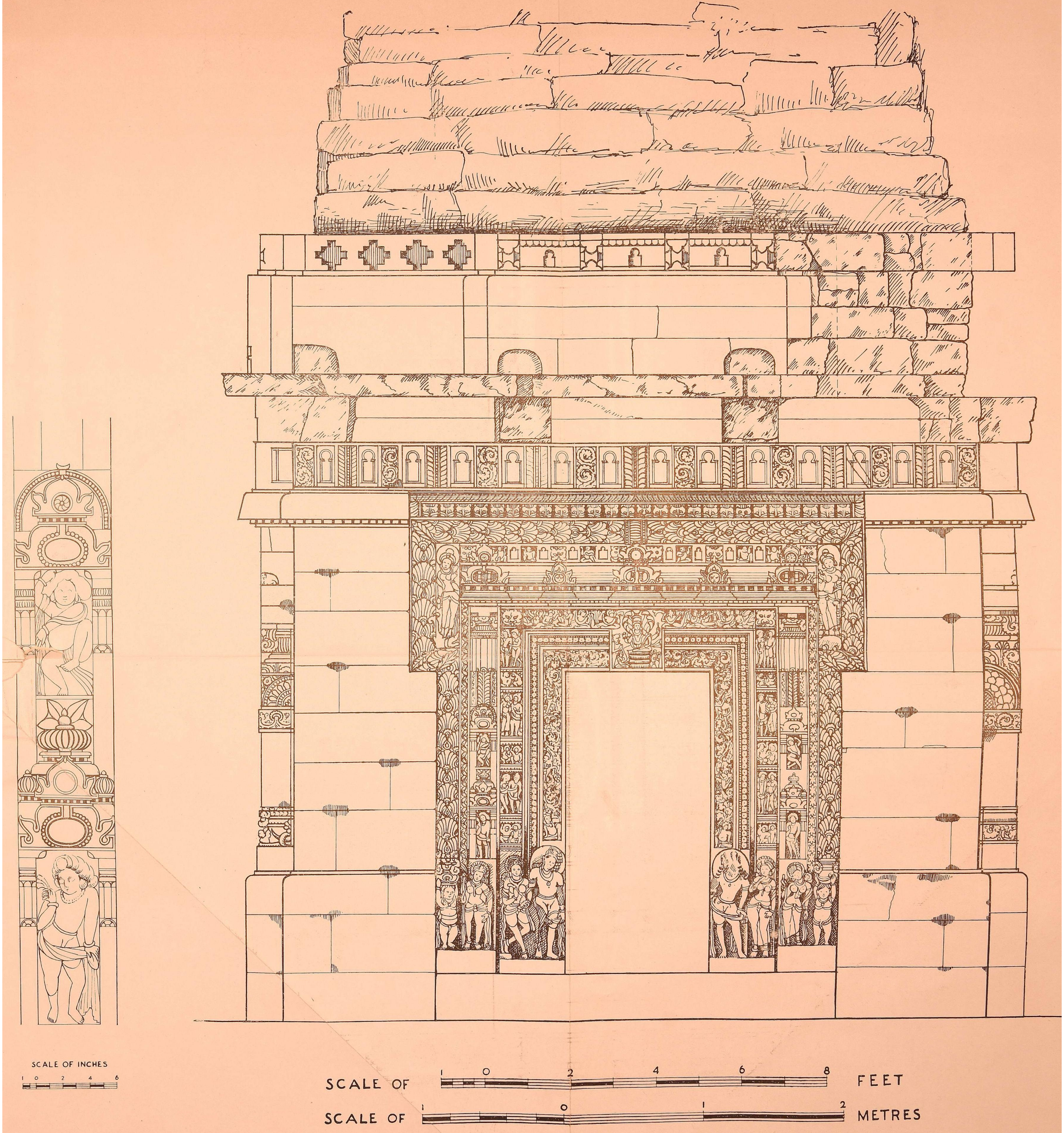
Bird's eye view of the Gupta temple and the surroundings.



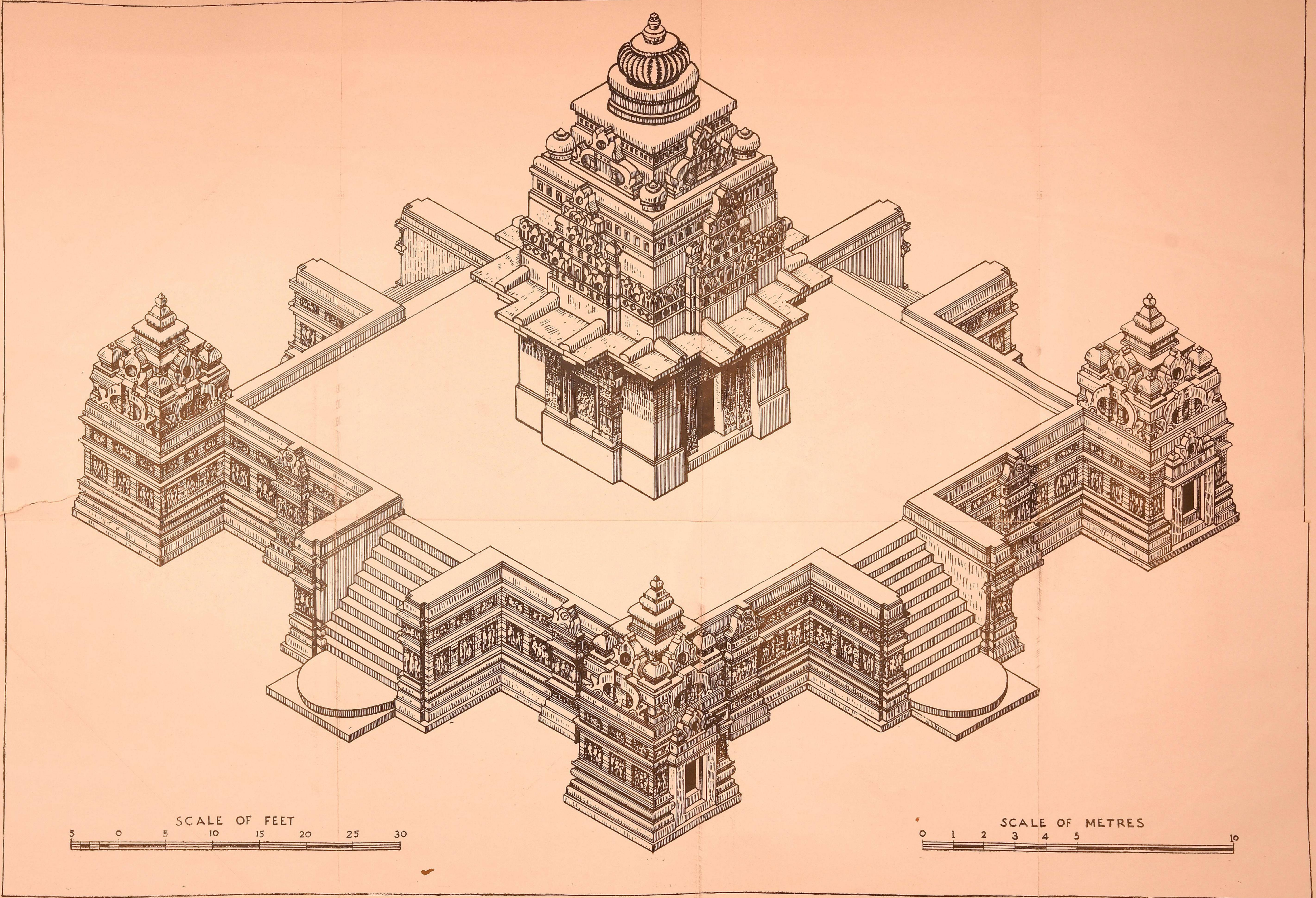
Plan of the temple.



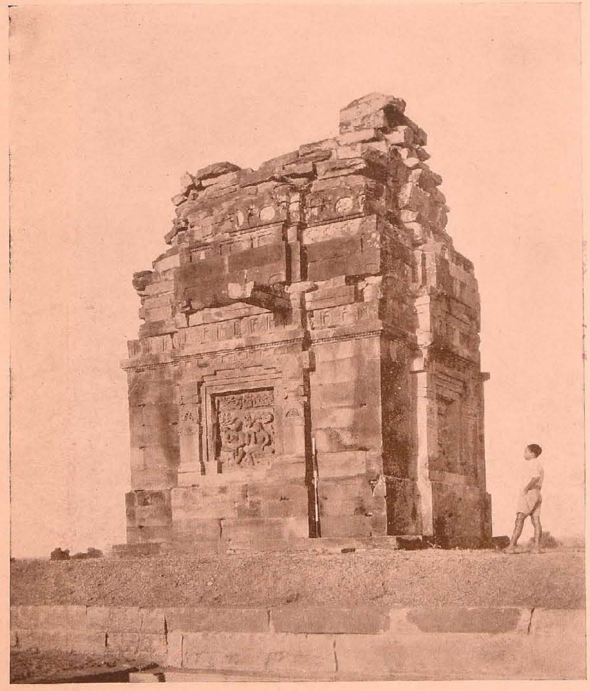
Sections and elevations of the temple.



Detail of front façade.



Isometric projection showing conjectural restoration of the temple from north-west.

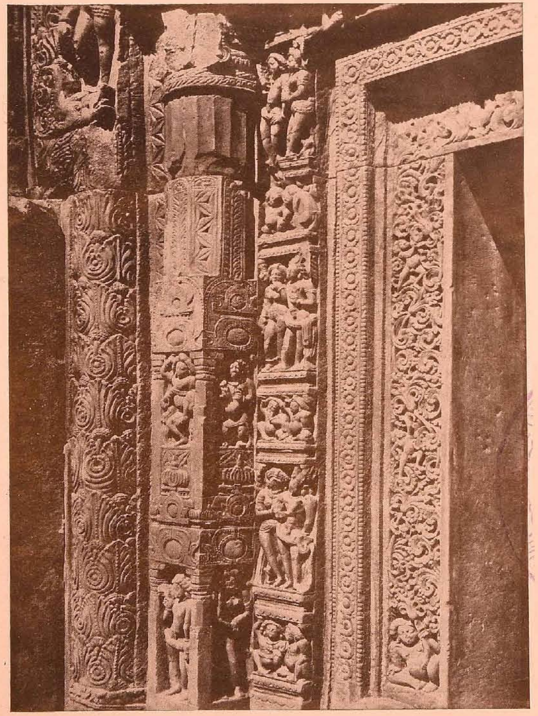


(*a*) East view of the sanctum showing cantilever beam below the broken *chhajjā*.

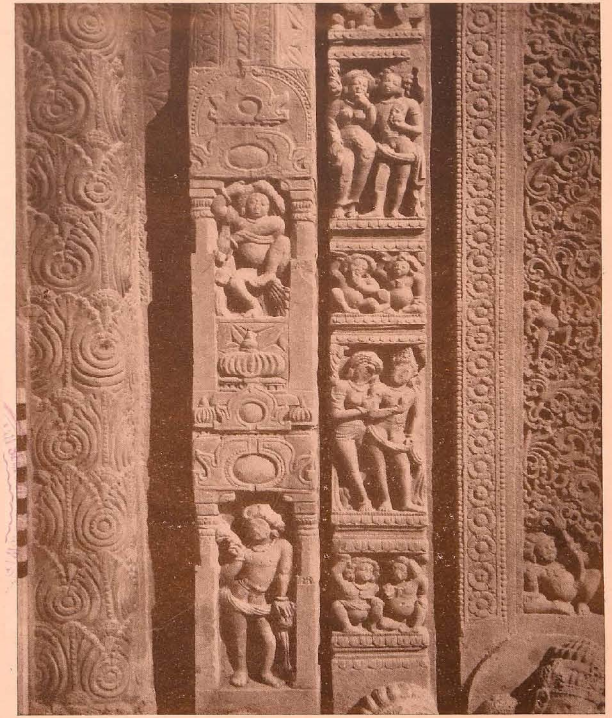
(*b*) Sanctum showing bad restoration of the core of the *śikhara* from south-west.

(*a*) The temple showing restoration of angular shrines, steps and core from south-east.

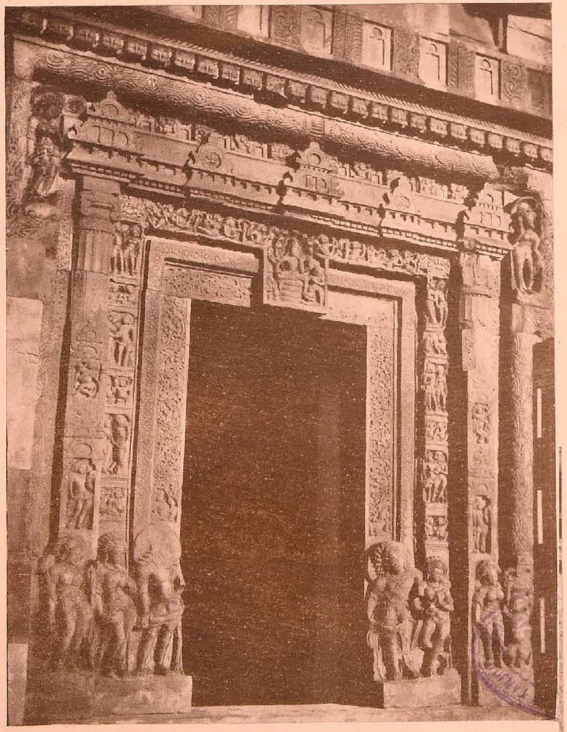
(*b*) The temple showing restoration of angular shrines, and core from north-west.



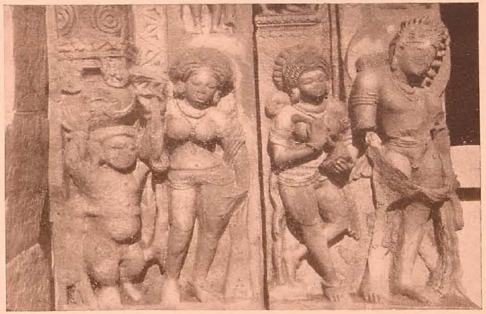
(*a*) Sanctum. Detailed view of the left jamb of the doorway.



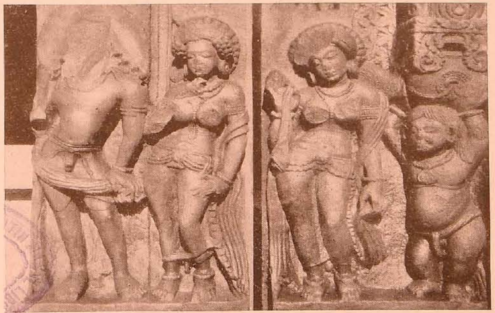
(*b*) Sanctum. Detailed view of the lower part of the left jamb of the doorway.



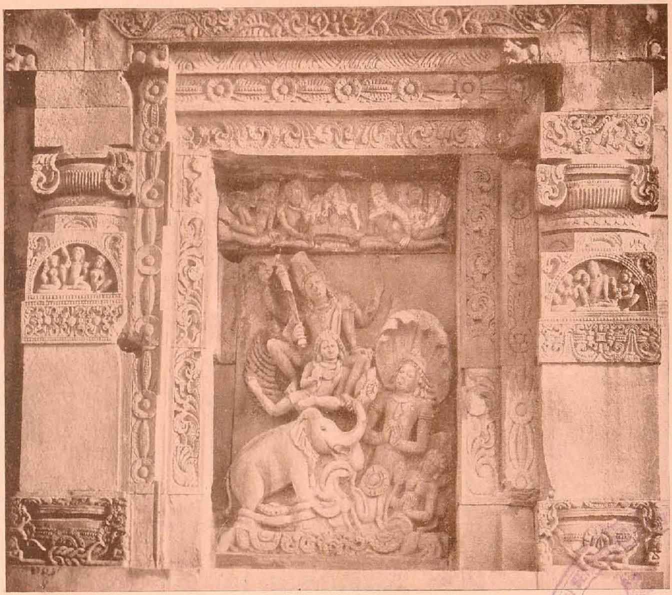
(*a*) Sanctum. Detailed view of the doorway.



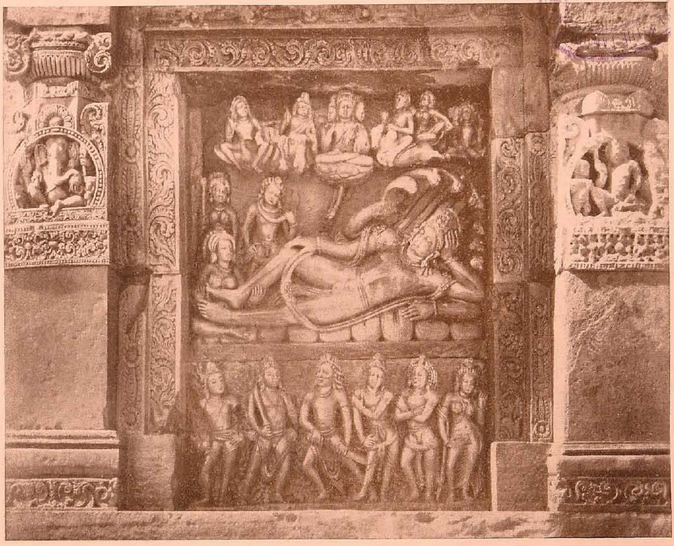
(*b*) Sanctum. Figures at the lower end of the left jamb of the doorway.



(*c*) Sanctum. Figures at the lower end of the right jamb of the doroway.



(*a*) Sanctum. Rathikābimba showing Gajendra-moksha panel.



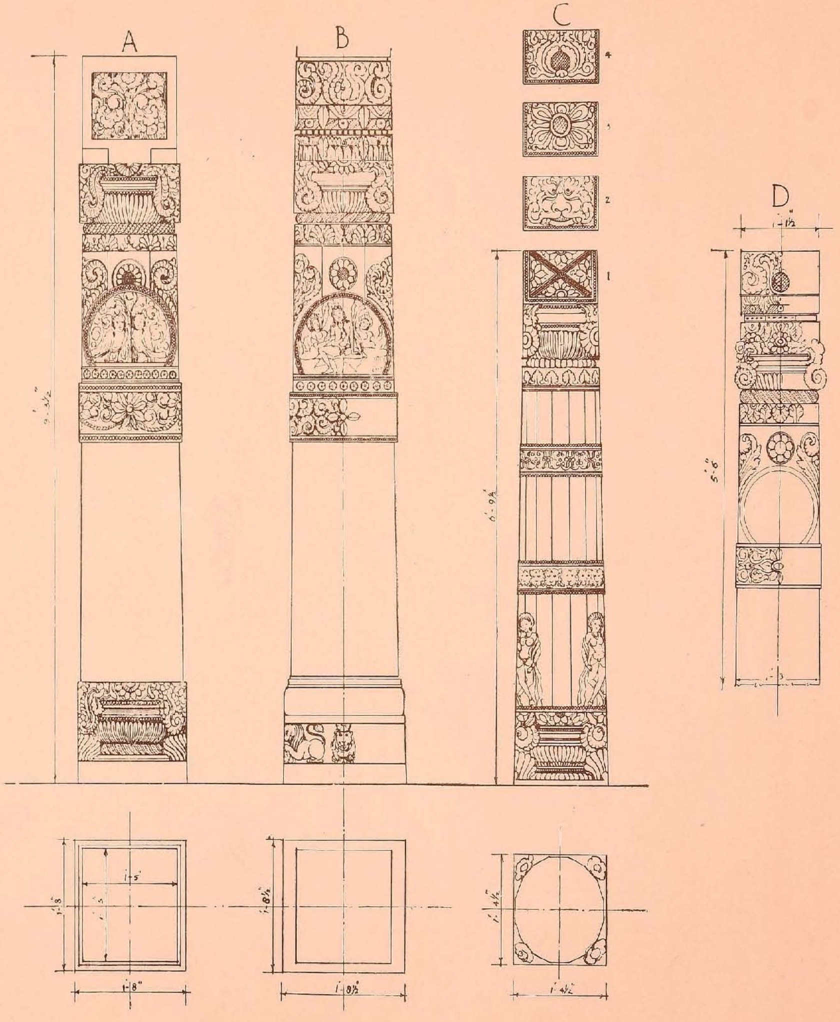
(*b*) Sanctum. Rathikābimba showing Anantaśāyī panel.

PLATE XI

(*a*) Sanctum. Detail of the Nara-Nārāyaṇa panel.

(*b*) Sanctum. Rathikābimba showing Nara-Nārāyaṇa panel.

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL



Gupta pillars showing elevation and plan.

(a)

(b)

(c)

The Gupta pillars with inscription on the left hand one.

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

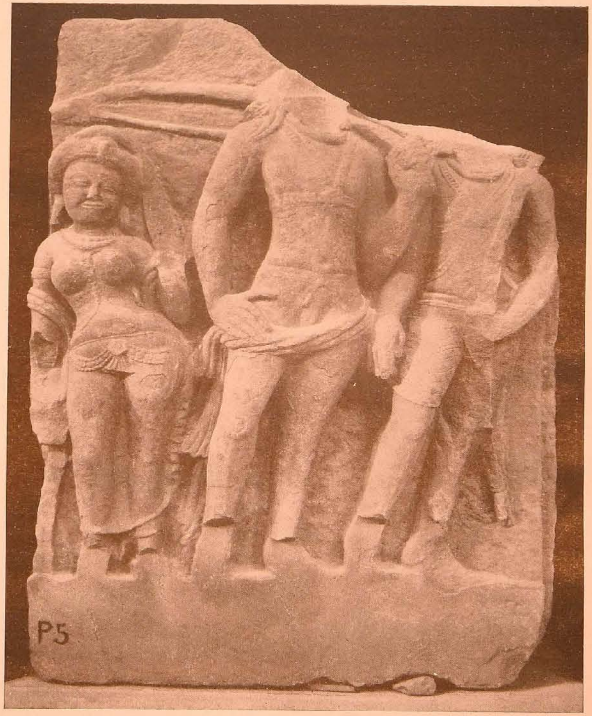
(e)

(f)

(a-f) Details of semi-circular medallions with two large Gupta pillars.

Panels of the plinth.

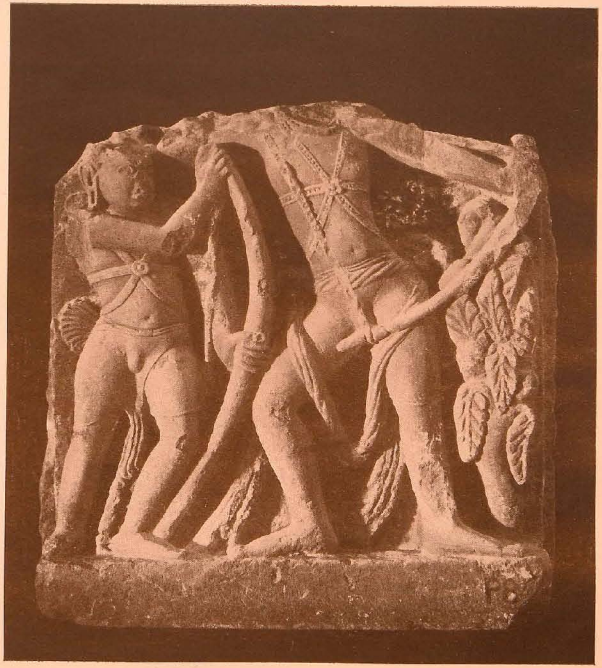
(*a*) Ahalyā-uddhāra.



(*b*) Vana-gamana.

Panels of the plinth

(*a*) Visit of Rāma, Lakshmaṇa and Sītā to the hermitage of the sage Atri.



(*b*) Rāma and Lakshmaṇa at archery.

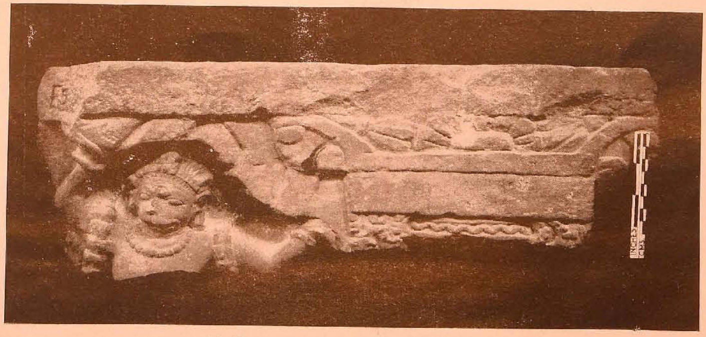
Panels of the plinth

(*a*) Lakshmaṇa deforming Śūrpaṇakhā.

(*c*) Sugrīva under intoxication.

(*d*) Rāvaṇa threatening Sītā.

(*b*) Lakshmaṇa garlanding Sugrīva.



(*e*) Hanūmān carrying hill with Sañjīvanī.

Panels of the plinth

(*a*) Devakī handing over the child Kṛishṇa to Vasudeva.

(*b*) Kṛishṇa hurling a butter-cart.

Panels of the plinth

(*a*) Nanda and Yaśodā fondling Kṛishṇa and Baladeva.

(*b*) Vāmana visiting Bali.

(*c*) Kṛishṇa and Sudāmā.

Panels of the plinth

(a) Sunda and Upasunda seated side by side.

(b) Sunda and Upasunda with the damsel Tilottamā.

(d) Dampatī couple.

(c) Sunda and Upasunda in mutual combat.

Panels of the plinth

(*a*) Torso depicting *chīra-haraṇa*.

(*b*) Torso depicting Dhenukāsura-vadha.

(*c*) Kaṁsa-Vadha.

(*d*) Bust showing Vasudeva fondling Kṛishṇa.

(*e*) Torso depicting a Gopī.

(*f*) Torso depicting Kṛishṇa in the arm of his father.

(*a*) Upper half of Anantaśāyī Vishṇu.

(*b*) Bust of Vishṇu.

(*d*) Bust of Vishṇu.

(*c*) **Architectural member showing Narasiṁha in the medallion.**

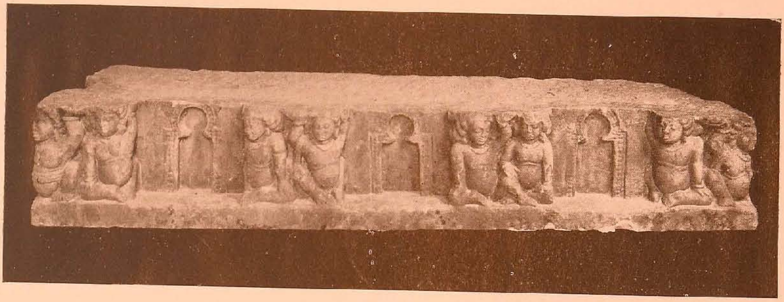
(*a*) Hind part of Vishṇu (?) head.

(*b*) Bust of a male figure showing necklaces.

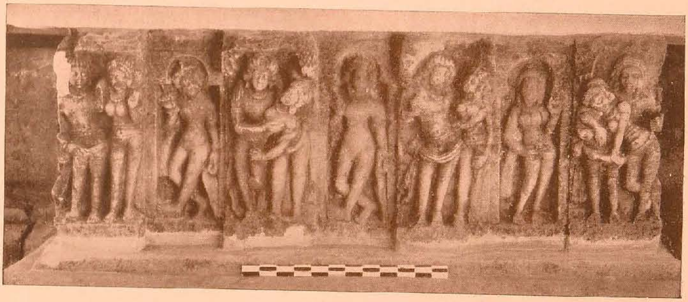
(*c*) Dampati couples.

(*d*) Bust of Svayamprabhā.

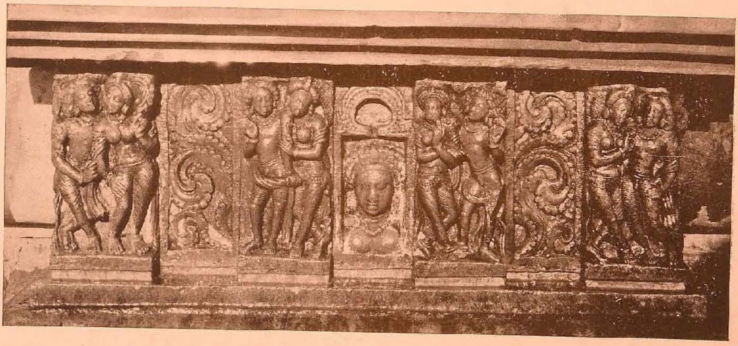
Panels on the projections of the plinth



(*a*) Dwarf couples supporting the entablatures.



(*b*) Dampatī couples.

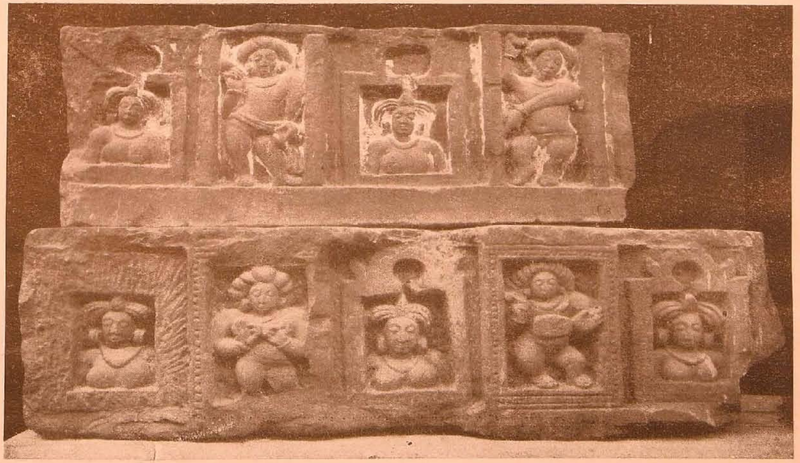


(c) Dampatī couples with a female bust in a balcony in the centre.

Panels on the projections of the plinth

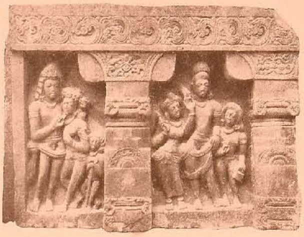
(*a*) Two female dance panels.

(*b*) Dampati couples and a dance panel.



(*c*) Two panels showing busts of females in windows and dwarfs.

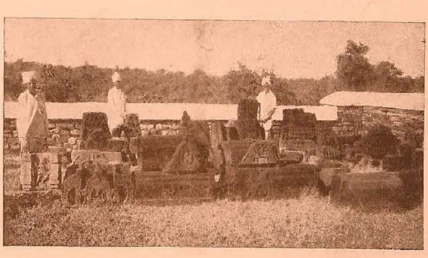
Panels on the projections of the plinth



(*a*) Later Gupta panel showing Dampati couples.

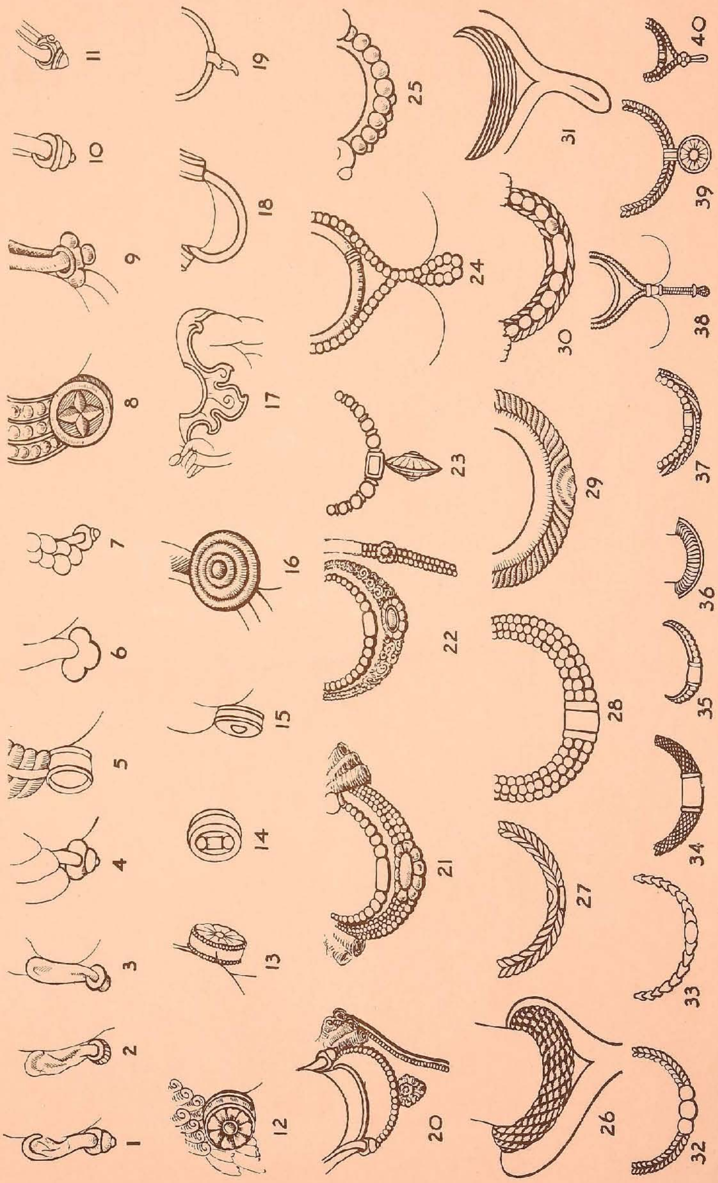
(*b*) Architectural member showing a Vidyādhara couple.

(*c*) Architectural member showing lion-heads in medallions.

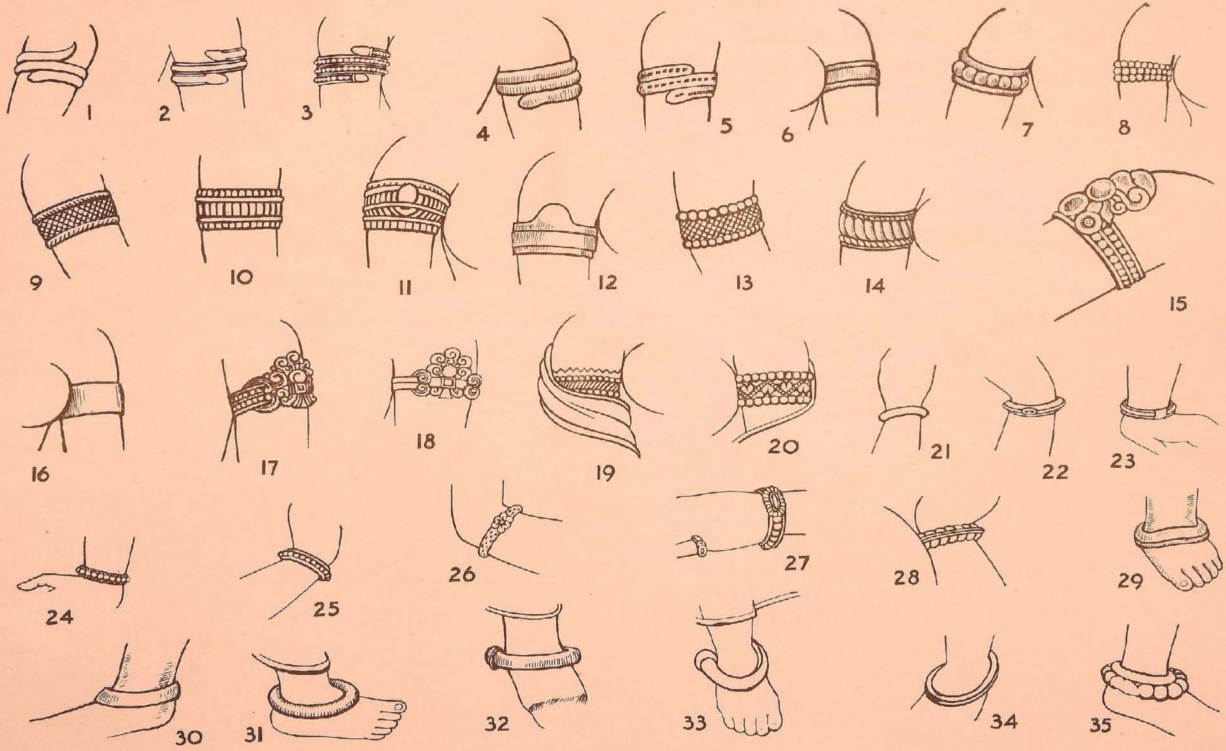


(*d*) Architectural members showing pieces of copings, etc.

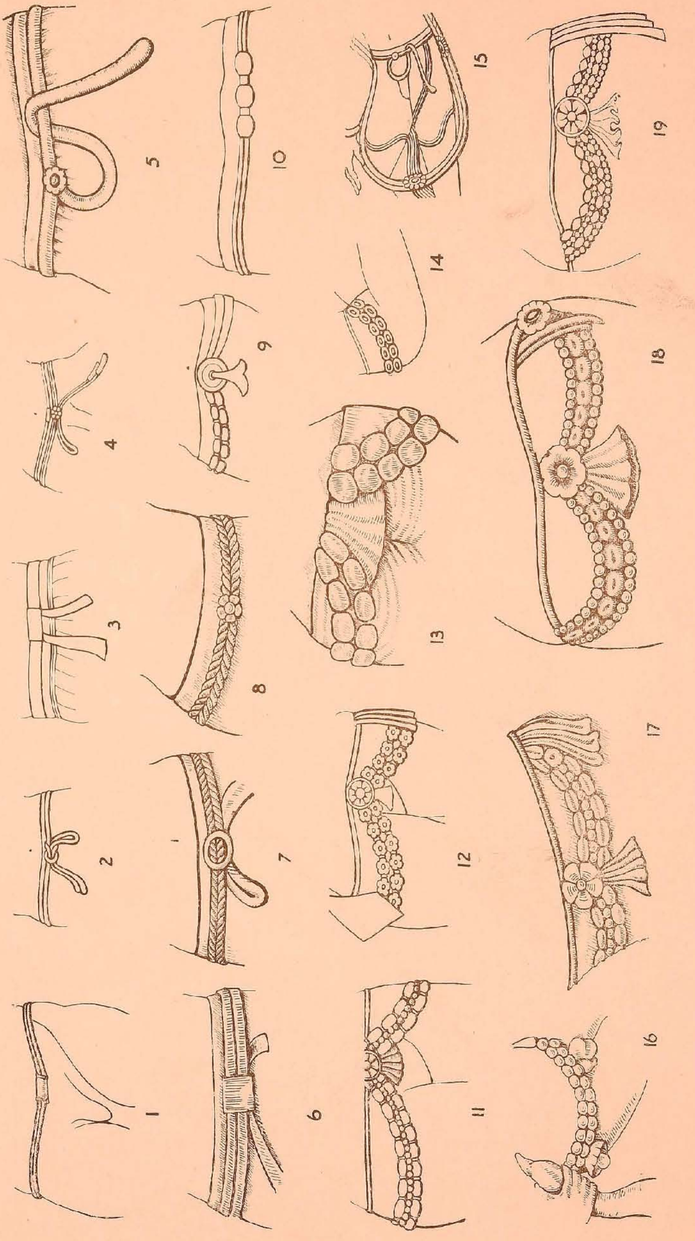
Hair and head-dresses.



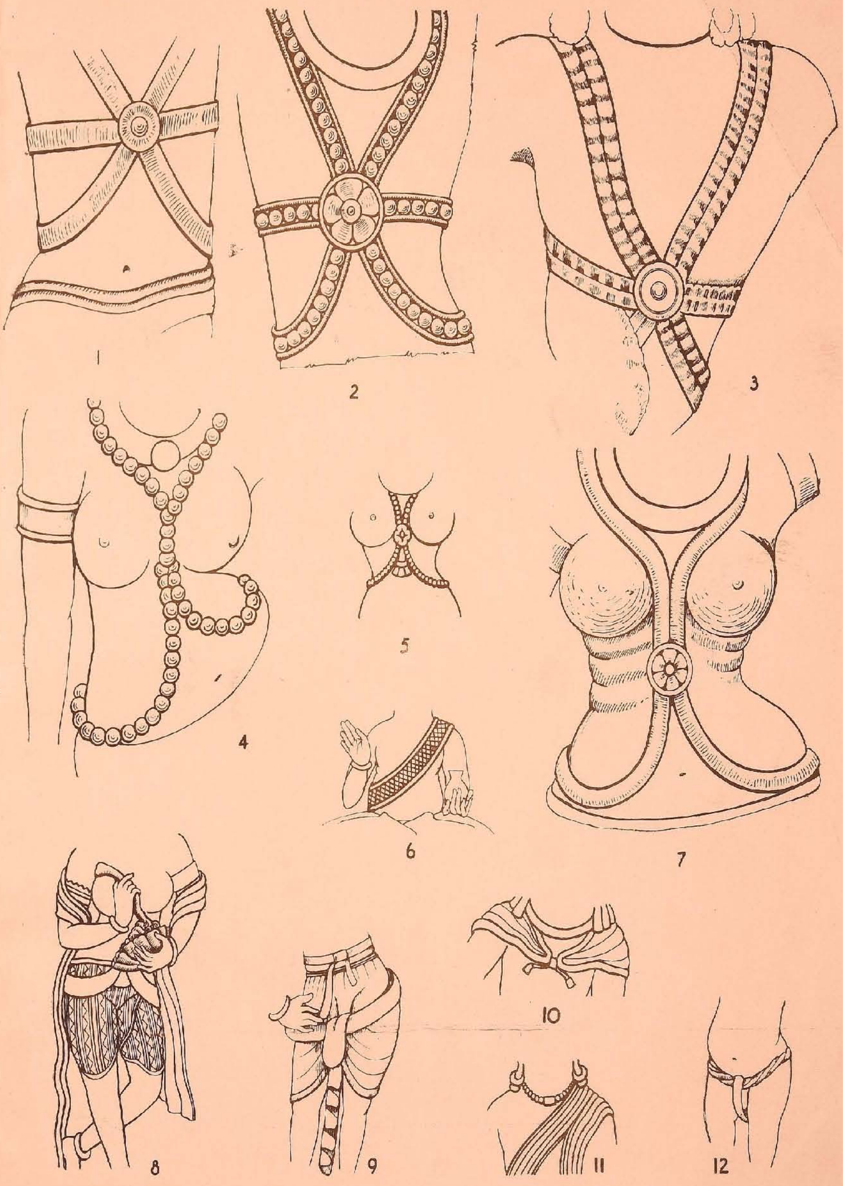
Ear ornaments and necklaces.



Armlets, bracelets, finger-ring and anklets.



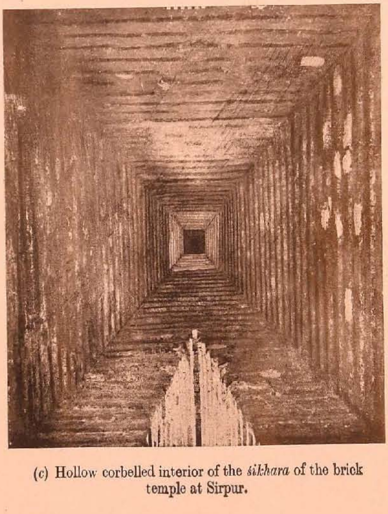
Girdles, strings and *mekhalās*.



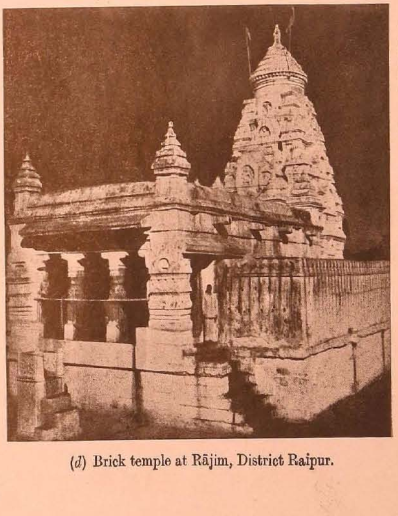
Drapery.

(*a*) Brick temple at Bhitargāon, District Kanpur.

(*b*) Brick temple at Sirpur, District Raipur.



(*c*) Hollow corbelled interior of the *śikhara* of the brick temple at Sirpur.



(*d*) Brick temple at Rājim, District Raipur.